

THE TIMES

30P

No. 65,642

FRIDAY JULY 26 1996

TODAY

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

JOSEPH FIENNES IN A CYNICAL LOOK AT WAR AND LECHERY PAGE 30



THE TIMES GREAT SUMMER OF SPORT

GOING FOR NUMBER FOUR...

Ireland's golden girl is set to coin it

PAGE 44



END OF EMPIRE



VALERIE GROVE

Interviews
David Heathcoat-Amory
PAGE 17

TOMORROW

BRITISH BREAKS AT HALF PRICE DETAILS AND TOKEN, WEEKEND



Short demoted as Blair wields axe



Clare Short: TV walkout was the final straw

By JILL SHERMAN
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR last night removed Clare Short from her post as Shadow Transport Secretary in a ruthless reshuffle of his top team.

Ignoring the fact that she came third in the Shadow Cabinet elections, he demoted her to a low-key role in charge of overseas development and replaced her with Andrew Smith — who did not even stand in the poll. Ms Short reluctantly accepted the job after a series of meetings and telephone calls with the Lab-

our leader failed to secure her a better offer.

Mr Blair took full advantage of his success on Wednesday night — when his favoured team was re-elected by the party's MPs — by carrying out a bigger reshuffle than expected and ignoring the convention that only those elected should receive Shadow Cabinet posts.

Mr Smith's promotion from Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury was one of several changes that will give Gordon Brown a much stronger power base, since Mr Smith is one of the Shadow Chancellor's favoured lieutenants. He is re-

placed by Alistair Darling, who moves up from his job as City spokesman to the post he always wanted.

And Harriet Harman, another key ally of Mr Brown, moves sideways to social security, where she will play a big role in the Shadow Chancellor's welfare-to-work campaign.

She swaps jobs with Chris Smith, who has completed most of the pre-election policy work on social security, but has had several spending battles with Mr Brown. Ms Harman, who replaces Mr Smith on the crucial review group which is considering

scrapping child benefit for 16 to 18-year-olds, made clear last night that she would back Mr Brown's calls for tough spending decisions.

In a surprise move, Mr Blair has decided to bring in Frank Field, the chairman of the Social Security Select Committee, to advise his top team. Mr Field, known for his independent ideas which have sometimes been further to the right than some Tory right-wingers, will join Mr Blair, Ms Harman, David Blunkett and Ms Short on a new committee, chaired by Mr Brown, to co-ordinate the welfare-to-work policies.

It is believed that Ms Short was offered membership as a sop after initially refusing the job at overseas development. Ms Short, who only nine months ago was a rising star and well in with the Labour leadership, has been a loose cannon in recent months and Mr Blair decided some time ago he wanted to move her.

Her embarrassing walkout during a television interview on Wednesday night was the last straw and gave him the excuse to demote her to a job which is unlikely to be a Cabinet post in a Labour government. Ms Short resisted the change at a meeting

with Mr Blair on Wednesday night, and yesterday she had two further telephone conversations with the leader, during which she was said to have been offered the ODA post again or environmental protection, which has been re-created as a Shadow Cabinet post.

A leadership spokesman said that Ms Short accepted the first job offered her and that the proposal had been made partly because rail privatisation had been completed. "He (Mr Blair) has got huge respect for Clare and likes her and is delighted she

Continued on page 2, col 1

Victory for Portillo over £4bn RAF order

By MICHAEL EVANS AND ARTHUR LEATHLEY

A £4 billion defence order that will safeguard thousands of jobs was announced yesterday after Michael Heseltine was called in to resolve a Cabinet battle between the Chancellor and the Defence Secretary.

Michael Portillo said that the decision to award three RAF contracts for a new Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft and two missile systems to British companies would help to sustain about 5,000 jobs, although the firms involved said that far more would be created.

The announcement represented a victory for Mr Portillo over Kenneth Clarke, who had wanted the orders delayed until the autumn to save money. But Conservative backbenchers were becoming increasingly angry about the uncertainty caused by the clash between the ministers, and on Tuesday — after facing an embarrassing question in the Commons — John Major asked Mr Heseltine to arbitrate.

The three met for 45 minutes on Wednesday evening and finally agreed the terms of the orders in time for yesterday's Cabinet meeting.

British Aerospace was awarded the £2 billion contract to supply the RAF with 21 Nimrod 2000 aircraft, and it will collaborate with the French company Matra on a second order — for more than 1,000 conventionally armed stand-off missiles.

Rolls-Royce will provide the Nimrod engines, Racal the radar, and GEC, Smiths Industries and Shorts of Belfast will be among 200 contributing companies.

The third contract, for a new air-launched anti-tank weapon, goes to GEC and Marconi.

Mr Portillo's decision to favour the British bids for all three contracts over American rivals was welcomed last night as the defence industry and MPs' BAE said that 10,000 jobs would be created throughout Britain — either directly or indirectly — as a result of its £2 billion share of the order. These contracts will create and sustain many thousands of quality, high-technology jobs throughout the UK aerospace industry," Dick Evans, the chief executive, said.

Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, said: "The competitions were closely contested, and the results confirm that the defence industry in the UK can compete successfully on a global basis."

David Clark, the Shadow Defence Secretary, also welcomed the announcement, but he condemned the "weeks of Cabinet infighting and indecision" and accused Mr Portillo and Mr Clarke of playing politics with people's jobs.

The conflict between the two ministers was described by Whitehall sources yesterday as a classic stand-off between a spending department and the Treasury. "But because of the personalities involved, it could have become a real cause célèbre for the Right and Left of the Conservative Party."

Mr Heseltine — whose own Cabinet career was interrupted in the Eighties over a defence contract dispute — was called in to arbitrate after Mr Major was put on the defensive by a senior Tory MP in the Commons on Tuesday. He is understood to have sided with Mr Portillo over the important job implications of awarding the contracts as soon as possible.

But Treasury sources indicated last night that the Defence Secretary is likely to have to find further economies in his budget in the next spending round.

Officials said that the Chancellor had given away nothing, that would lead to extra spending commitments. The money for the RAF orders had already been accounted for in the Defence Ministry's long-term costings. The public spending ceiling would remain at £268.2 billion, an official said: "It's up to the Ministry of Defence how they allocate their resources."

A local radio station has run regular denunciations of the "foreign lickspittle whingers" (a use of one of the politer terms), and *The Times*, among other newspapers, was attacked for having the temerity to relay to its readers the transport and computer chaos of the opening days of what Atlanta promised would be "the greatest games of all



Britain's Mary King jumps to first place yesterday during the individual equestrian event, which lasts for three days

Atlanta turns on 'foreign whingers'

THE people of Atlanta are angry and bewildered about the way their city has been lambasted for organisational shortcomings during week one of the centennial Olympics.

Some have resorted to threats and Bill Campbell, the mayor, detecting a "bias against Southerners" was perhaps only half jesting when he remarked that the international media should be taken to the Olympic rifle range, put against a wall, and shot.

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time". I now have an insight into how one of my predecessors, William Howard Russell, the 19th Century war reporter, felt when he passed this way in the 1860s covering the American civil war for *The Times*.

His despatches, particularly the description of the hellish first battle of Bull Run, earned him numerous foes. He had to take refuge, finally fleeing the American continent.

Historians have since argued that the Confederacy, although it had been dis-

mayed by Russell's reports, later suffered from the absence of his objectivity.

Reporting the Olympics takes less courage and skill, but there have been moments when I have concealed my press identity badge lest it should lead to trouble with peccy natives.

During an interview on Atlanta's Radio WGST, I was sworn at, shouted at, and generally abused by the disc jockey Sean Hannity, who later gave listeners the telephone number for the British

Press corps and the Atlanta media centre. Numerous hate calls followed, promising awful things. Happily, there were also some calls of support from Georgians who apologised for Hannity's boorishness.

The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* carried aggressive messages. One ran simply: "To Quentin Letts in the *London Times* — kiss my grits!" (Grits being a maize breakfast porridge served in the deep South and little liked by outsiders).

An Atlanta discussion group has rallied to the city's support, attacking visitors who are unhappy with the Olympics' transport system and underground railway, which duly obliged yesterday with a rush-hour derailment.

Olympics, pages 15, 39 — 44

Burundi massacre fears after coup

FROM SAM KILEY
IN BURUNDI

THERE were fears last night that the central African republic of Burundi was about to be engulfed by new Hutu-Tutsi atrocities following a coup by the army.

The military closed the country's borders and airports and outlawed political parties as the United Nations reported two provincial towns surrounded by Tutsi rebels.

Para-commandos from the former colonial power Belgium are on alert to evacuate the more than 300 Belgian nationals if the situation deteriorates further. "Extremists are exploiting a cycle of ethnic fear for their own political ends. The world has to act now to break that cycle," David Bryer, director of Oxfam, said in London.

Burundi's tragic history is stained with tribal massacres. The worst was in 1972 when Tutsis worried about their grip on power killed an estimated 100,000 Hutus.

Army takeover, page 14

Home loan rates lowest since 1965

Home loans fell to their lowest level since January 1965 after the Nationwide Building Society shaved 0.25 per cent off its standard mortgage to 6.49 per cent.

The new rate, which takes effect from September 1, represents a monthly saving of nearly £7 on a £50,000 repayment mortgage. Other lenders held off matching Nationwide. Page 23

Israeli peace call

The Israeli Prime Minister threw down a peace challenge to Syria by offering to pull his occupying troops out of southern Lebanon in exchange for peace along the northern Israel border. Pages 11, 16, 19

Black boxes find

The investigation into the crash of TWA Flight 800 was close to a breakthrough as experts in Washington examined the aircraft's "black boxes", which divers recovered off Long Island. Page 15

Imran apology

Imran Khan withdrew his defence that his allegations of ball-tampering against Ian Botham were justified, and offered the former England cricket captain a public apology. Pages 5, 22

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30
Jobs boost, page 9
Leading article, page 19

LETTERS
OBITUARIES
BERNARD LEVIN

42-43
WEATHER
CROSSWORD

19
ARPS
CHESS & BRIDGE
COURT & SOCIAL

30-31
SPORT
VALERIE GROVE
LAW REPORT

36-42, 44
17
33

Tories call up Thatcher to revive grassroots

By JILL SHERMAN
AND ANDREW PIERCE

BARONESS THATCHER has been asked to play a substantial role in the Conservative election campaign. Although she has lost much of her influence with MPs, party strategists argue that she is still a considerable asset in rallying support among grassroots Tories.

Senior party sources say that Lady Thatcher, 70, will campaign in marginal seats, particularly where she knows the MPs, and will again address the candidates' conference at the beginning of the campaign.

She is more likely to provide photo opportunities than big speeches. The

ex-premier played a relatively discreet part in the 1992 election campaign, when she had only recently been jilted from office. Her main speech was addressing the candidates, with a show of unity with her successor, John Major. Although she spent much of the election abroad, she visited her friends' constituencies before she went. The tour was organised by Conservative Central Office, but she chose where she visited.

She is still close to some rightwing MPs, including John Redwood and John Whittingdale, her former parliamentary private secretary, but several former admirers say she has lost her influence on the party.

Four potential future Tory leaders are heading the Conservative Party's summer publicity over the next two months. Party sources stressed that the campaign would not focus solely on attacking Labour, but would involve several policy announcements next month.

Michael Heseltine, the deputy prime minister, will take the lead on jobs and enterprise. Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, will head the attacks on Labour. Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, will focus on law and order, and Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, will take overall responsibility for constitutional issues, backed by Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, and William Hague, the Welsh Secretary. Today Mr Forsyth will take the Scottish frontbench to Linlithgow, near Edinburgh, to campaign against Labour's plans for a Scottish Parliament.

Tomorrow John Redwood is scheduled to fly to the United States for a nine-day lecture tour, meeting leading figures in the Republican party. Lady Thatcher has given him a glowing letter of introduction, while delivering a thinly veiled snub to Mr Portillo, who was once seen as her favourite heir.

She has turned down Mr Portillo's request to attend a fund-raising function, at a date of her choosing, at his Enfield Southgate conservative association.

Gaffe-prone Short fails new Labour's smooth-talking test

By ALICE THOMSON AND PHILIP WEBSTER

CLARE SHORT yesterday paid the penalty for being left behind in new Labour's long march to media friendliness.

A series of gaffes, culminating in an abrupt and stormy departure from a television studio earlier this week, highlighted her failure to fit in. Her demotion to Overseas Development spokesman meant that she is unlikely to gain any further publicity unless accompanied by the Princess of Wales to a war zone.

The left-wing Ms Short, who campaigned for Margaret Beckett as leader and who once called Mr Blair "a pious voice", proved that ideologically she could go a long way fast when he was elected two years ago. She was soon being hailed as part of brave new Labour and the woman who initiated all-women selection lists for Labour candidates.

Only some tabloid newspapers seemed to dislike her, labelling her "too ugly to be

raped" after she tried to ban Page Three girls.

But last year it seemed that every time she was given a microphone, in the words of an irritated Labour aide she "resorted to unprofessional and naive drivell from the days of old Labour". Other Labour sources said she was "infectious and has the fuse the length of her name".

She felt increasingly compelled to stray from her transport brief. First she embarrassed Mr Blair when she said on air that Labour should consider legalisation of cannabis.

She ran into trouble when she appeared to be less than supportive of Harriet Harman over her decision to send her son to a selective grammar school. This April she revived arguments over Labour's tax plans for middle income earners when she said she would not object to paying a bit more tax on her salary of £35,000 a year.

When it was made clear that

she should shut up, she retaliated: "I don't respect people who hide behind those kinds of description" and later added: "I will not be silenced." She was replaced by her deputy in interviews.

The last straw came on Wednesday when she removed her microphone and walked out of a television interview after she was challenged about the Tube strike.

But many left-wing backbenchers sympathised. They see Ms Short as new Labour's canary, prepared to stick her neck out when principles are being betrayed. They admire her honesty, bravery and Brummie accent. Like John Prescott, one of her closest allies, she doesn't behave like a modern politician.

When asked why she hadn't merely lied about cannabis, the staunch Catholic said: "I cannot live in a world where I am obliged to lie. If that's the price of politics, I'm not paying it." The price of honesty will be regular trips to the Third World.

Gordon Brown's powerbase within the Labour leadership was strengthened further yesterday by the appointments of Andrew Smith to Shadow Transport Secretary and Alastair Darling to Shadow Treasury Chief Secretary.

Mr Smith and Mr Darling are quintessentially new Labour but both have worked for the Shadow Chancellor for several years.

□ Marjorie Mowlam, the Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary and a close confidante of Tony Blair, apologised to the Commons after failing to disclose a £21,000 payment from Mirror Group Newspapers. She did not declare the payment for a researcher in her office.

Mr Blair is expected to announce a modest reshuffle of other frontbenchers today.

Leading article, page 19

Blair wields the axe

Continued from page 1
is taking a very important job in a very important tradition in the Labour Party," the spokesman said.

The environmental protection post goes to Michael Meacher. He moves from employment, where he was always overshadowed by Mr Blunkett, who heads the joint education and employment brief.

Mr Blair's decision to swap Ms Harman and Mr Smith was given various interpretations yesterday. Some insiders believe that Mr Smith has not been radical enough for Mr Blair and has balked at making tough spending decisions. He has rowed with Mr Brown.

over extending unemployment benefits, and over changes to child benefit.

But other sources suggest that Ms Harman has given a disappointing performance at health and failed to tackle some key issues. Mr Blair's office made clear that he had been keen to move her "to give her a new lease of life".

He suggested that the job would give her a boost after her endorsement by the parliamentary party, which re-elected her to the Shadow Cabinet in spite of the anger over her decision over her son's schooling.

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£90m jail building scheme will ease overcrowding

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

AN EMERGENCY building programme for the Prison Service was announced yesterday after ministers were told that overcrowding could provoke disturbances.

The service won an estimated £90 million for vital security improvements to five jails plus the provision of 3,000 places to cater for an inmate population rising at the rate of 250 a week.

But the Treasury has told Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, to find the money from within the present Home Office budget. It will come from an underspend of funds on the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme.

Richard Tilt, the new director general of the Prison Service, told governors in the 135 jails in England and Wales of his success in getting urgent extra money to reduce overcrowding. "It has been a hard-argued battle but I think the arguments won the day," he said. "Without the money

there would have been a continuing risk of not having the best security standards in key local prisons."

He warned governors of the difficulties in dealing with a prison population predicted to reach 60,000 by next March, compared with an earlier forecast of 54,500. Last week the number of inmates was 55,851, an increase of 280 on the previous week.

The additional money is to be spent on improving security at Manchester jail, Durham, Bristol, High Down near Sutton in Surrey and Woodhill near Milton Keynes, which all hold some high-risk inmates. It will also be used to refurbish 1,300 cells in vacant Victorian wings at Liverpool, Leeds, Preston and Wandsworth jails. The first modernised cells will be available for use in Liverpool and Preston next April, in Leeds by December next year and at Wandsworth by early 1998.

Two thousand additional places are to be provided by building 20 houseblocks in prison grounds. One thousand of the new cells will be open by July 1997 and a further thousand in early 1998.

David Riddick, general secretary of the Prison Governors' Association, said: "This argument over money has brought us to the brink of disaster. We sincerely hope that lessons have been learnt for the future".

The scale of the problem was highlighted last week when there were only 60 empty beds in the northern area of the Prison Service.

Inmates have had to be moved to jails in southern England to ease the pressure, particularly in the North West.

The rapidly rising prison population is a result of government policy. Figures published yesterday show that the tough rhetoric on law and order by both main parties has been reflected in longer sentences being imposed.

Plea to deny asylum to extremists

THE Home Secretary is to demand that asylum be refused to supporters of terrorism as part of a G7 package to curb international terrorism (Richard Ford writes).

Michael Howard wants the United Nations to decide that planning, funding or inciting terrorism is contrary to UN principles. Under his plan, anyone engaged in such activities would not be entitled to asylum under the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees.

He is to put his plan to an anti-terrorism summit of foreign and interior ministers from G7 states and Russia in Paris on Tuesday. He said he was confident that the plan would win agreement at the UN. Mr Howard is also to put forward plans for an international directory of counterterrorism experience.

The Government has already announced proposals to give British courts powers to prosecute "foreign extremists" for conspiring or inciting terrorism or criminal acts abroad while in the UK.

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The Government has already announced

Hitmen hired to kill husband

Private eye's last inquiry was into wife's murder plot

BY ADRIAN LEE

THERE was no shortage of suspects when a private detective nicknamed Barry the Bastard was discovered bludgeoned to death in bath of cold water. As one rival of Barry Trigwell put it when asked who was the likely killer: "It could have been any of 50 people."

But when police began unravelling the 44-year-old's complex affairs, they discovered that there was one person who most wanted him dead. Anne Trigwell, 43, his wife of less than a year, had a strong alibi — she was 6,000 miles away in her native South Africa — but her motives were stronger. She had a lover and stood to inherit £400,000 from insurance and mortgage bonds if her husband died.

Yesterday she began a life sentence after being convicted at Birmingham Crown Court of arranging for two South African hitmen to murder her husband at their home in Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands. It was said Mr Justice Nelson, "a cold, calculated offence. A chilling murder."

"You inspired and planned the death of your husband and you were actively involved in ensuring that the killers were

able to perform their gruesome and vicious task."

Mr Trigwell was beaten to death in February last year when the hitmen's gun failed to go off and his body was placed in the bath to hamper the forensic investigation. He was discovered by John Wright, his partner at the Birmingham branch of the Nationwide Investigations Agency.

Mrs Trigwell, who had ostensibly flown to South Africa to care for a pregnant daughter by a previous marriage, was persuaded back to England to attend his inquest by police, who told her she was not a suspect. She shocked them by her lack of emotion.

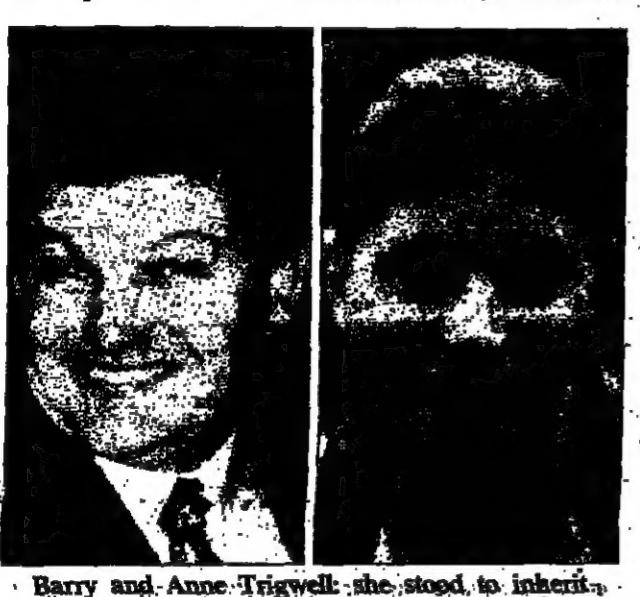
A few days later she was arrested and eight officers travelled to South Africa where they discovered links between Mrs Trigwell and a nightclub owner, Alex Mirri, 51. Mrs Trigwell was said to have paid him £15,000 for the contract killing, carried out by Loren Sundqvist and Paul Ras.

They came to Britain and tried to lure the private detective to his death. But he suspected someone was trying to kill him and, a week before

Detective Superintendent Ken Evans, who led the investigation, said he was still hopeful the nightclub owner and the two assassins would be brought to justice, despite the present lack of an extradition treaty between Britain and South Africa.

"To me personally that is a very high priority. I would like to see them before our courts and it is one for the respective governments to consider."

Of Mrs Trigwell, he said: "I think she is a very callous, cold-hearted woman who calculated what she was going to do. There was no other motive than money. There wasn't one single bit of emotion throughout the whole of this — that was how she was throughout interview."



Barry and Anne Trigwell: she stood to inherit £400,000 after he was beaten to death at home



A skater makes tracks through the London traffic, above, while Katrina Manson arrives in her father's dinghy on time for a job interview



Commuters find a way around Tube strikes

BY JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

THEY came by boat, bicycle and scooter, on skates or on foot, an army of 1.6 million commuters determined to beat the Tube strike and make it into work on time.

With the London Underground paralysed for the fourth time this summer, the capital's workforce is resorting to novel means of transport to reach the office.

Katrina Manson, 16, was so keen to get to a job interview in the City that her father gave her a lift in his dinghy up the Thames from their home in Chiswick, west London.

Mr Manson said: "Katrina was furious last week when she had to struggle to get to work. She did not get there until midday and she ended up walking a lot of the way. We were determined that she should not be beaten again." They set off at 7am and Katrina arrived on time three hours later.

The pavements and parks of the capital were packed with pedestrians, cyclists and in-line skaters making their

way to work in the sun from 7am onwards as temperatures reached the mid-70s.

Nadia Martin, 24, who works at a City merchant bank, skated the six miles from Earls Court. "We have showers at work so, as the weather is nice, I thought why not? I bought the cheapest pair I could find for £40 and this is only the second time I have been out on them."

Bicycles unused for years were seen wobbling towards the Square Mile with pinstriped workers navigating their way to the office. One senior civil servant said he had borrowed his 14-year-old daughter's racing bike to get to Whitehall.

Martin Young, 31, a financial adviser, completed a 40-mile round trip by cycling from his office in Staines to Waterloo to catch a train to a meeting in south London. The strike is a pain, but I can get showered in the office. I have really quite enjoyed cycling today."

Ian Smith, 53, managing

Funeral for girl murdered on trip to France

SCHOOLMATES wept yesterday at a simple funeral service for Caroline Dickinson, the 13-year-old raped and suffocated in a hostel at Pleine Fougeres, near St Malo.

The town of Launceston in Cornwall was in mourning as family, friends and teachers crowded into the parish church to say farewell to the child killed during a week-long holiday in Brittany. Among the congregation were the 39 pupils and five teachers who went with Caroline on the

trip, including the four companions who slept in nearby beds as she was raped and suffocated in the hostel at Pleine Fougeres, near St Malo.

The church of St Mary Magdalene, where the funeral took place, is near Launceston College, where Caroline was a second-year pupil. Her parents, Susan and John Dickinson, and sister Jennifer, 11, led the congregation. A French contingent included the Mayor and

Deputy Mayor of Pleine Fougeres and representatives from the hotel. Caroline's poem, *My Cat* — written when she was 10 — was read by Robert Bone, head teacher of Launceston Primary School. The service was followed by a burial attended by family and close friends.

A 39-year-old vagrant has been charged with Caroline's murder and rape. Patrice Pade will plead guilty to the charges at his trial in the late autumn.

The taxman wants his slice of golf profits

BY RICHARD DUCE

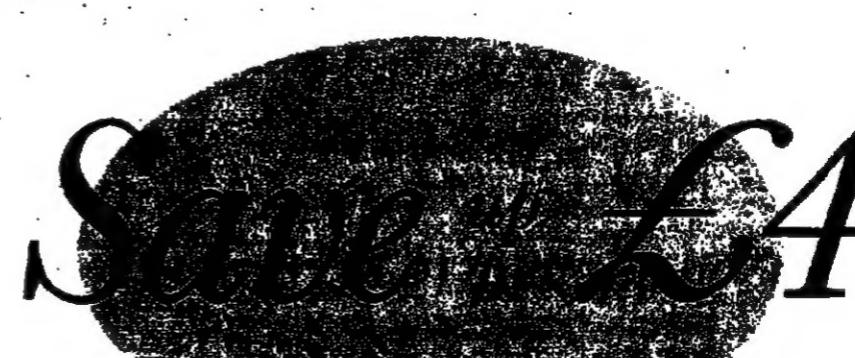
WELL-HEELED residents of Lytham St Annes can expect the unwanted attentions of the taxman after the recent golf Open Championship.

Many let their homes close to the Lancashire course for the duration of the ten-day competition for about £5,000. However, the dealings were monitored by a small team of Inland Revenue investigators who studied the small advertisements in newspapers and toured the streets surrounding the famous course.

Some managed to get £300 for allowing their drives and garages to be used for parking while others set up food stalls or became overnight landladies by placing "Vacancies" signs in their windows. In all the Open was estimated to be worth £13 million to the town.

Tax officials always monitor economic activity surrounding big sporting events, such as Wimbledon, and an unscheduled tax return through the post is a fair indication that they are after a cut of any money made. In the last financial year the Inland Revenue recovered £88.7 million in such operations. Car boot sales are also monitored.

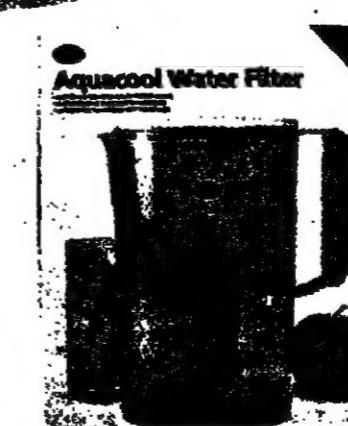
The Inland Revenue said yesterday: "If someone is simply clearing out their garage as a one-off sale we wouldn't be interested, but if they are regularly trading then we are." If people have not been declaring tax, come to us and tell us about it. We don't want to frighten people, we will treat them fairly."



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£150,000 fine for airline that put passengers at risk

BY HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH MIDLAND Airways was fined £150,000 plus £25,000 costs yesterday for "an act of gross negligence" which, but for the skill of a pilot, could have led to the crash of a Boeing 737 jet and the deaths of 182 people.

Judge Daniel Rodwell was told that the jet left East Midlands airport bound for Lanzarote but was forced to make an emergency landing 13 minutes later because the airline's staff had failed to replace oil caps after a detailed inspection of the engines.

Luton Crown Court was told that had it not been for the vigilance and skill of the pilot, Barney Reichman, who noticed the rapid oil loss, the aircraft would have crashed, "with a very high probability of killing the people on board".

British Midland Airways admitted two charges of negligently endangering life under articles 50 and 51 of the 1989 Air Navigation Order. It was the first prosecution of a scheduled airline by the Civil Aviation Authority.

Judge Rodwell said: "There were quite serious defects in the company's procedures. The public must have confidence that companies which run airlines take all proper and necessary steps to ensure

the safety of passengers." Edmund Lawson, QC, for the company, said immense damage had been caused to the company's reputation and this was real commercial damage. The company accepted it had been negligent, but there was no suggestion of recklessness, he said.

Last night John Woofe, deputy chairman and chief operations director of the airline, said that the judge's comments were very fair. "We have done everything humanly possible to ensure that nothing like this can ever happen again."

Two maintenance engineers who had failed to spot that caps on the oil sumps of each engine had not been replaced were dismissed and the airline has now drastically changed its maintenance procedures.

One of the unnamed engineers is still working on jet aircraft for another airline.

Hours earlier a report by the Department of Transport's air accident investigation branch said that the incident, and two others involving faulty maintenance within the past three years on other airlines, cast "doubt upon the adequacy of the organisation and infrastructure which has developed to support aircraft

maintenance". It said that the work on the British Midland jets was carried out when many engineers were on holiday or off sick. All three incidents took place at night "when judgment is generally likely to be impaired".

"The foundations of most of the current practices employed in aircraft maintenance were laid when the aircraft, operating and commercial environments were very different from today," it said.

These industry standards have all developed over time, but in these three events have been demonstrated to be fallible."

Fifteen safety recommendations are made, most of them technical changes to the way maintenance is carried out and monitored, and ten of which are directed at the Civil Aviation Authority which brought the charges against British Midland.

After the case Captain Reichman said it was a pilot's job to cope with the unexpected. "We have to anticipate the worst case scenario. We are not just up there to press a button and trust in the wonders of modern technology. We have to be ready for this kind of eventuality."

THE Duchess of York is forever late and disorganized — but impressive at raising money for good causes, according to a colleague in a leading charity. Dominic Prince, a prominent member of the Motor Neurone Disease Association, says in *The Spectator* that her behaviour made committee stalwarts grit their teeth.

Mr Prince writes: "She is always at least half-an-hour late for meetings, complains to me about tabloid journalists and is hopelessly disorganized,

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Hollywood producer, to cough up a good deal of much-needed loot. I watched her do it, and very impressive it was. She promised her then estranged husband would attend a golf tournament and got pledges on the spot. Last year she was responsible for raising £200,000 of the £2 million income. Its income was £2,000 when she started."

The Duchess is patron to seven charities. Yesterday her New York publicist, Howard J. Rubenstein, said: "Despite the false and negative image in this story, the Duchess will not be deterred from her important work on behalf of children and those in need."

The Motor Neurone Disease Association said: "The Duchess of York has provided much-appreciated support to people with motor neurone disease and contributed enormously to the success of fundraising activities."

Fundraiser is less than charitable about Duchess

BY DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE Duchess of York is forever late and disorganized — but impressive at raising money for good causes, according to a colleague in a leading charity. Dominic Prince, a prominent member of the Motor Neurone Disease Association, says in *The Spectator* that her behaviour made committee stalwarts grit their teeth.

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The rhino lies anaesthetised, left, while the steel plate is fitted to its hoof. After the operation it walked away, safe but groggy

Pedicure helps rhino keep toehold on life

By LIN JENKINS

EXPERTS made a house call yesterday to perform an emergency pedicure. Their 28-year-old client was suffering from a cracked toenail. As she was a female white rhinoceros weighing four tonnes, the equipment included a heavy-duty crane and an artificial nail made of stainless steel.

The pioneering treatment was necessary to save the life of Maggot, one of an endangered species, which has

lived at Woburn Safari Park since 1972. An infection in the nail was in danger of travelling further up the leg and becoming untreatable. In the wild, hard-baked earth would keep the nail trim, but the softer and wetter conditions in Britain allowed it to grow and soften.

Maggot was anaesthetised while two veterinary surgeons who specialise in treating exotic animals and one of the country's leading farriers cleaned out the infected crack

and knitted the two parts together with a plate. A crane capable of lifting 25 tonnes was on standby in case the rhino fell the wrong way. Afterwards Maggot staggered up and groggily walked off, to the relief of the team. Stuart Elliot, one of the vets, said: "Anaesthetising a creature as big as a rhino is very risky. The animal's body weight can crush internal organs and cut off circulation, causing heart failure."

Silvia Symons, who teaches at the

Hereford School of Farriery, said: "I am 90 per cent happy with the work. Time will tell. I would be 100 per cent if it was a horse, but I've never done a rhino before."

Nick Whiting, Maggot's keeper for the past 13 years, added: "I am so relieved. I could not sleep worrying about her because there is always a big risk of knocking out large animals like this. She is a smashing-natured animal; I knew she would take it in her stride."

Best maths teaching 'is made in Taiwan'

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

TEACHERS should look to Taiwan for lessons in reversing the decline in ability at mathematics among British pupils, school inspectors said yesterday.

Primary schools should try holding back low-achievers for a year and setting more tests and homework to ensure "all children progressed at a similar pace", said a report on international achievement by Ofsted, the school inspection agency.

Lessons from successful Pacific Rim countries could revitalise mathematics teaching in the same way that Japanese methods helped to save the British car industry, said David Reynolds, co-author of the report, *Worlds Apart*.

The report also said that the most successful European countries, including Germany and Switzerland, used more teaching of whole classes of mixed ability at primary level and, like Taiwan, selection at secondary schools.

A series of surveys showed British pupils falling further behind most of the developed world in mathematics from the 1960s to the 1990s.

Research to be published this year and disclosed earlier this month in *The Times* showed that six years ago English 13-year-olds were 3 per cent above the world average in mathematics. They have fallen to 3 per cent below, answering 53 per cent of questions correctly compared with 79 per cent in first-placed Singapore.

Professor Reynolds, from Newcastle University, said: "The situation is so worrying that the risk involved in looking

outward and trying new practices is worth taking."

"There is a large range of achievement in the UK and, although our top end is up there with other countries, we have a huge long tail which many people have said is the great British educational problem."

This tail could be shortened by promoting high-achievers to the year ahead or holding back under-achievers. In Taiwanese primary schools, the same work is set for all children, who are expected to keep up, and the best pupils help to tutor classmates when they have finished their work. Regular testing is used to diagnose problems early and children who have fallen behind catch up at break times and after school.

Professor Reynolds said: "Teachers should realise you can get all children over a hurdle and you do not have to distribute them across a range which has been the historic British practice."

Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, said the report was not intended as "teacher-bashing". He added: "This is an attempt to contribute positively to the debate about standards and how they can be raised. We hope there won't be a head-in-the-sand reaction."

The Government's latest education White Paper will make it easier for schools to introduce partial selection. Professor Reynolds said that, conversely, Taiwan was about to begin experimenting with comprehensive secondary schools.

Education, page 39



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Scientists use grey matter to give hope to paralysis victims

By NICK NUTTALL
TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

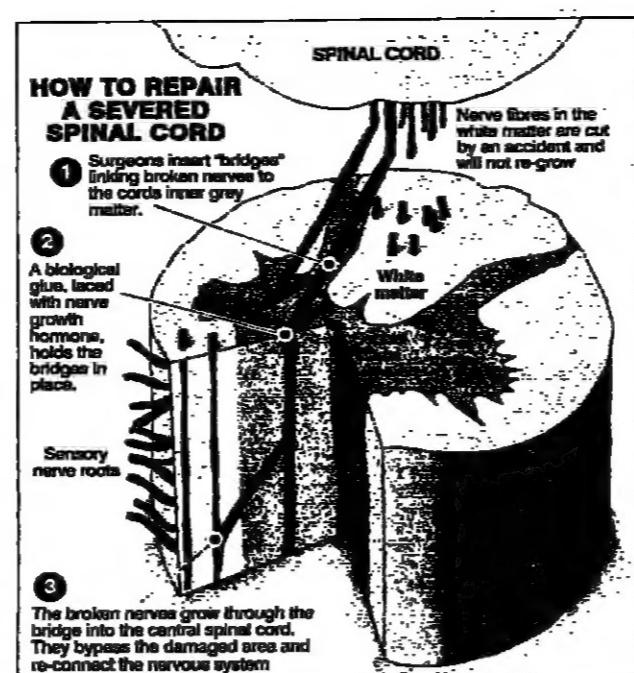
A BREAKTHROUGH in spinal injury research has been made by scientists who have restored movement to the legs of paralysed animals.

The achievement is being hailed a milestone in the quest to find a treatment for people such as Christopher Reeve, the *Superman* actor, who was paralysed in a horse-riding accident. Some 40,000 people in Britain have spinal damage from accident or disease.

The pioneering research, published in *Science*, is by a team at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden. The technique hinges on a new way of re-routing severed nerve fibres. Nerves or axons in the spinal cord travel up and down in the outer layer of the cord in the white matter. Previous attempts to reconnect broken nerve fibres directly have failed, and scientists found that the white matter secretes a protein that inhibits

growth. The Karolinska team have overcome this by linking broken fibres into the central area of grey matter, by-passing the inhibiting protein.

Up to 18 nerve fibres, taken from elsewhere in the body and measuring about half a millimetre in diameter, are used to make the links between the severed nerve endings and the grey matter. A substance called fibrin glue, similar to the material that causes blood to clot, is



The technique that may help those who have been paralysed by spinal injury, such as Christopher Reeve, left

ment for people with severe spinal injuries might be available in a decade.

He added that other exciting implications, which held hope for human spinal injury victims, had emerged. "People should not be rushing to their doctors just yet... the treatment is not ready. But this is a breakthrough. The scientists have demonstrated something that was thought to be impossible." He said the research made it possible that a treat-

ment for people with severe spinal injuries might be available in a decade.

He added that other exciting implications, which held hope for human spinal injury victims, had emerged. "People should not be rushing to their doctors just yet... the treatment is not ready. But this is a breakthrough. The scientists have demonstrated something that was thought to be impossible." Professor Young said.

"This kind of research is very positive and we all get terribly excited, but it can cause a lot of distress," said Ms Crowley, who is based at the London spinal unit of the

Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital. Stephen Bradshaw of the Spinal Injuries Association said that if appeared to be another "excellent step forward but must not be trumpeted too much".

He feared that the relatives of spinal injury victims might rush out and raise money for an operation that was still probably a long way off. The charity believes this money could be better spent on "living for the here and now".

Top-quality fish come on stream

WEEKEND SHOPPING

JULY is a good month for fish: quality improves outside the spawning season (Diana Thorp writes). The mild-cured Manx kipper, available only in June and July, makes an excellent breakfast. Wild salmon, believed by many to be superior to its farmed cousin, is delicious now. Average prices per lb include Dover sole £9, plaice £2, wild salmon £4, sea trout £3. Promotions include:

Marks & Spencer: lamb loin chops 9.99kg, leg knuckle £4.99 kg, two seasoned chicken breasts £1.99p 325g, cherries £1.99 450g. Bramley apple tart £1.69 510g, all premium ice-cream reduced by 50%.

Safeway: pork and beef sausages 79p 454g, rindless Dutch back bacon unsmoked £3.39, smoked £3.49 600g, medium avocados 29p each, white seedless grapes 99p lb, red plums 66p lb.

Sainsbury's: fresh rump steak £7.49 kg, fresh pork bone-in loin chops £5.49 kg, English mild cheddar £3.59 kg, large Angel cake £1.12, loose Jonagold red apples 55p lb.

Somerfield: fresh beef, topside, topround, silverside £4.14 kg, pre-sliced Scottish smoked salmon £2.82 200g, continental growing lettuce 89p twin pack, Walls Blue Ribbon vanilla slice 79p ll.

Tesco: new season half leg of lamb £5.89, rainbow trout fillets 3-6oz £2.99 lb, new potatoes 9p lb, tiramisu £1.49, strawberries 99p 227g.

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The Times, in association with The Federation of Zoos, gives you the opportunity take a child free when you spend a day at the zoo. There are 41 locations to choose from (a list was published on Saturday and Monday) where you can save up to £6. The offer is valid until August 31, with the exception of Bank Holiday Monday, August 26.

Visiting a zoo today is an exciting experience for a child. They have imaginative ways of introducing children to wild and dangerous animals. At the Lakeland Wildlife Oasis, Cumbria, for instance, they can crawl through a tunnel underneath the meerkats' sand pit to pop up, protected under a perspex dome, to meet the inquisitive creatures face to face. At Edinburgh the penguins stroll around the lawn amongst the visitors. And at Thrigby Hall, near Great Yarmouth, one of the favourite attractions is nearly rubbing noses with an alligator, from the safety of protective glass.

The Federation of Zoological Gardens of Great Britain and Ireland is a charity which represents the interests of 60 zoological and wildlife collections.

HOW TO APPLY
Collect four different numbered tokens from *The Times*, attach them to the voucher (already published) and present it at the zoo's ticket office. You will be entitled to a free child entry when paying one full adult admission. The voucher is valid for one zoo visit.



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RAF equipment orders will create thousands of jobs

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE three equipment orders for the RAF announced yesterday will create thousands of jobs and provide it with new generation precision weapon systems.

After weeks of Cabinet infighting during which it looked as if the orders, worth nearly £4 billion, might be delayed until the autumn, Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, emerged from a Cabinet meeting to announce that British companies had been awarded all three contracts in preference to strong American rivals.

The biggest order was for 21 Nimrod 2000 maritime patrol aircraft, worth about £2 billion, which will be made by British Aerospace in partnership with about 200 other companies, including Rolls-Royce, GEC, Racal, Smiths Industries, Short Brothers of Belfast and the American company Boeing.

Nimrod 2000 will be a refurbished version of the present Nimrod with new wings and new mission systems. The main rival to Nimrod was the American Orion 2000, a new version of the Orion P3, built by Lockheed Martin.

Ministry of Defence officials

said the Nimrod order would sustain 2,600 jobs. However, British Aerospace claimed 10,000 direct and indirect jobs would be either created or sustained, including 5,300 in the North, 350 in the Midlands, 2,250 in the South, 500 in Scotland, 1,200 in Wales and 200 in Northern Ireland.

The Nimrod 2000, which will be capable of long-range, long-lasting anti-submarine patrols as well as search and rescue operations, is due to come into service in 2002.

One of the key last-minute developments that wrapped up the contract for British Aerospace was the decision to include GEC as one of the principal partners. GEC was already due to play a minor role in supplying some of the equipment for Nimrod 2000, such as the towed radar decoy.

The two other orders are for a conventionally armed stand-off missile, Casom, worth £800 million, and an anti-armour weapon system, worth £700 million. Both will be carried by the RAF's Tornados, Harriers and the next generation combat aircraft, the Eurofighter 2000.

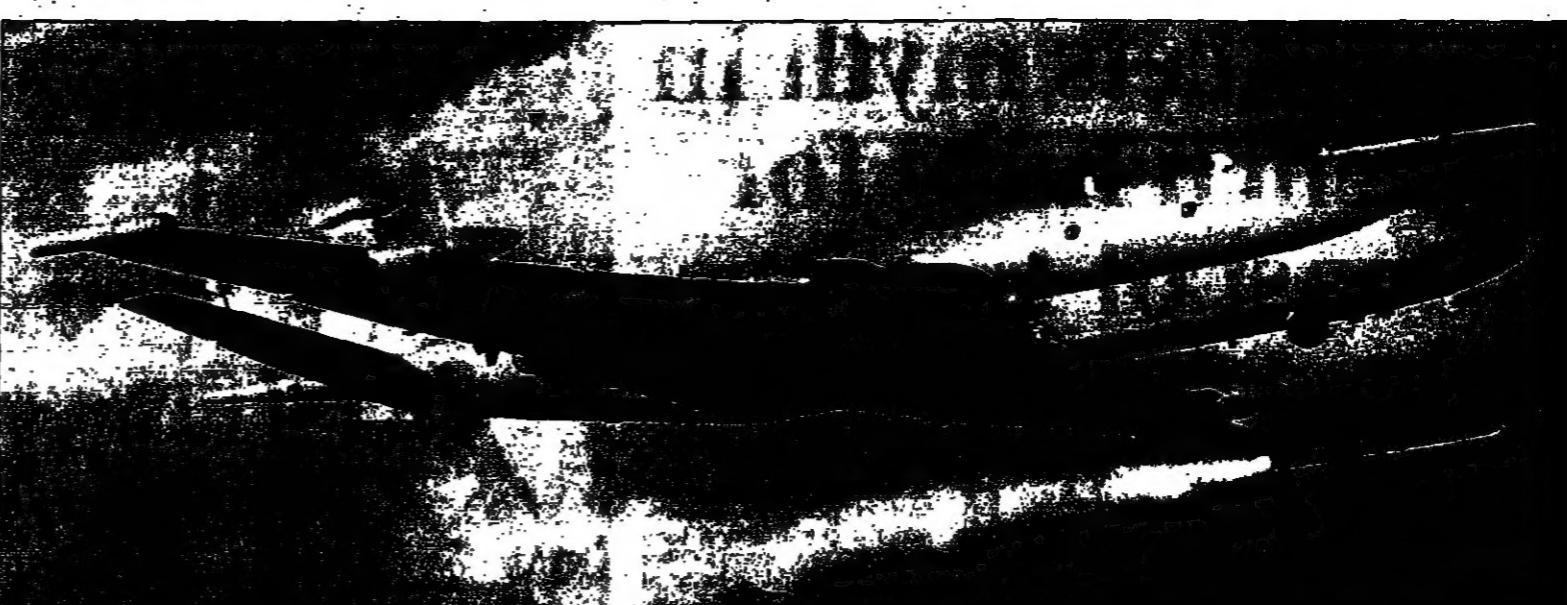
Again, Mr Portillo chose the British/European option in

stead of the American one, although, as MoD officials said, all the bids were "interesting", with each one having overseas companies partnered with British firms.

The Casom order was awarded to British Aerospace Dynamics, which is partnered with the French company Matra. Their missile, Storm Shadow, is a development of Matra's Apache system.

For British Aerospace it was vital to win the Casom contract because it plans to merge its missile business with Matra and the success of this would have been undermined had Mr Portillo chosen an American missile. President Chirac of France has been promoting the Storm Shadow bid — most recently, it is alleged, in a phone call to John Major — as a strong supporter

The Nimrod 2000: British Aerospace will build 21 of the maritime patrol aircraft, creating or sustaining up to 10,000 jobs throughout the country



Storm Shadow: cruise missile for the RAF

Portillo can celebrate — his successor will pick up the bill

Michael Portillo was entitled to look delighted outside 10 Downing Street yesterday as he announced three big defence orders. Thanks to Michael Heseltine and the pressures of pre-election politics, he was able to see off the Treasury's desire to delay the announcement of the orders. Hence he was able to please the Armed Forces, the sizeable defence lobby on the Tory benches, and the arms procurement industry. But Mr Portillo will not be Defence Secretary when the bills have to be paid and the contradictions between defence

commitments and resources have to be sorted out.

The story is not nearly as simple as it appears. What was not said is as significant as what was said. The key, as always, is money. Going back over a century, the Treasury has always argued that savings could be found from the defence budget. Since the end of the Cold War, it has kept up the pressure on the Ministry of Defence, as reflected in the Options for Change exercise and the commitment to switch resources from support to combat activities in *Front Line First*. Last November, defence

spending was cut by £500 million below previous plans for this financial year and by £400 million for next year. This has already produced serious strains, particularly as a result of the Boscombe commitment, even after taking account of the controversial sale of married quarters. The Defence Committee warned in its report on the estimates on Wednesday against any further reductions.

The Treasury has been keen to

take another look at the defence budget and has therefore been very wary of deciding on new orders. Kenneth Clarke wanted the orders to be considered as part of the annual Cabinet review of spending plans so that no announcements should be made now. Mr Portillo argued for an early decision, in particular, the announcement of the order of Storm Shadow missiles should cement the recently announced merger of the missile businesses of British Aerospace and Matra of France. In an uncanny echo of the arguments

over a European or American future for Westland helicopters in early 1986, Mr Heseltine seems to have been particularly influenced by the case that announcing the orders now could assist the restructuring of the European arms industry. His intervention late on Wednesday forced Mr Clarke to accept that the orders would have to be made now, rather than later.

However, Mr Portillo has not won the increase in his budget that he wanted to finance the orders. Indeed, the Treasury insists that the Cabinet has accepted that defence spending should be no

higher for the next few years than was announced in last November's Budget. In that sense, yesterday's announcement is a battle deferred. Of course, relatively little will be spent on the orders in the short term and the cost will be stretched out over several years. But, as the Defence Committee made clear, there is already no room for manoeuvre in the defence budget.

What the Government has done, as so often in the past, is to announce big job-saving defence orders before an election and leave until later awkward questions of how they will be financed. Ques-

tions about how to reconcile Tory ambitions to "enhance the fighting strength of the Armed Forces" and to contain public spending have been deferred. Whoever is Defence Secretary in a year will have a hard time from the Treasury, whoever is Chancellor, David Clark, Shadow Defence Secretary, will be well aware how Gordon Brown further strengthened his control and power base in yesterday's shadow Cabinet reshuffle. The defence world should celebrate while it can. It will not last.

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Fact meets myth in French hunt for Beast of Larzac

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN LARZAC

IN A scene straight out of French rural history, hundreds of men carrying staves, knives and guns assembled on a plateau in southern France this week to hunt a wolf, the most feared animal in the nation's folklore.

The Beast of Larzac, the wild and mountainous region in the Massif Central, has killed more than 60 sheep since May, spreading fear among the locals and reviving myths that are deeply embedded in the collective memory.

Some say there is not a lone wolf but a pack, others that the beast is a feral canine hybrid. Several of the grizzled farmers who gathered at the military base south of Millau this week reported seeing their quarry loping across the land or hearing it howl at night.

Veterinary experts who examined dead sheep confirm that a wolf is to blame — either one that escaped from a nature park or an animal raised as a domestic pet and then released into the wild in a region which relies on sheep-



A European wolf rearing to produce Roquefort cheese.

Wolves are officially extinct in France but this month, after repeated attempts to trap the animal failed, the Minister for the Environment granted a special dispensation to allow a full-scale wolf hunt for the first time this century.

As Captain Philippe Durand of the gendarmerie marshalled his hunters early on Wednesday, the odds appeared to be heavily stacked against the beast. The wolf found a defender in Brigitte Bardot, the former actress and

animal welfare campaigner, who offered a £1,300 reward if it was captured unharmed. But ranged against the animal were some 300 heavily armed farmers, policemen, soldiers, national guardmen, a team from the Government's Office of Hunting and a brace of firemen.

"Today's objectives are clear: at best we must capture the beast, at worst it must be destroyed," declared the captain, resplendent in khaki battle dress and a blue kepi. The Office of Hunting provided special wolf-capturing equipment including a padded body-suit with gloves and mask, tranquilliser darts and a lasso.

Captain Durand's tactics were simple: to mount a sort of pheasant drive with teeth, in which beaters carrying staves would advance in formation through the undergrowth and try to force the wolf towards the line of waiting gunmen.

"This is a dangerous animal, but it will attack out of fear rather than aggression."

the captain told the beaters, mostly young soldiers wearing green fatigues and red T-shirts who did seem overly reassured by the advice as they plunged into the tangled brush.

Robert Calazel, a bearded, strapping figure who might have emerged from an 18th-century woodcut depicting peasant life, has lost several sheep to the wolf of Larzac.

"This time we will get him," he observed grimly. That view was not borne out by ensuing events. A group of beaters went astray in the undergrowth and nearly blundered into the firing line.

As the temperature on the plateau rose from hot to roasting, disputes erupted between the various services involved, and the captain wilted under his kepi. Jokes about

Mme Bardot became increasingly off-colour. The firemen sloped off for lunch. "Wolf-hunting doesn't appear in the training manuals," muttered Under-Prefect Jean-Yves Chiaro, overseeing the operation.

A rumour went round that a "shot" had been fired. But this turned out to be a soldier whacking his stave against a tree. The wolf was spotted

the south, before transforming into a wild boar. By nightfall, the hunters had slogged through some ten square miles of rocks and brush, without a single sighting of the predator. As they trudged back to their cars, one whistled veteran remarked: "You have to have special eyesight to spot a wolf, sometimes it is just a shadow. They are the devil's creatures."

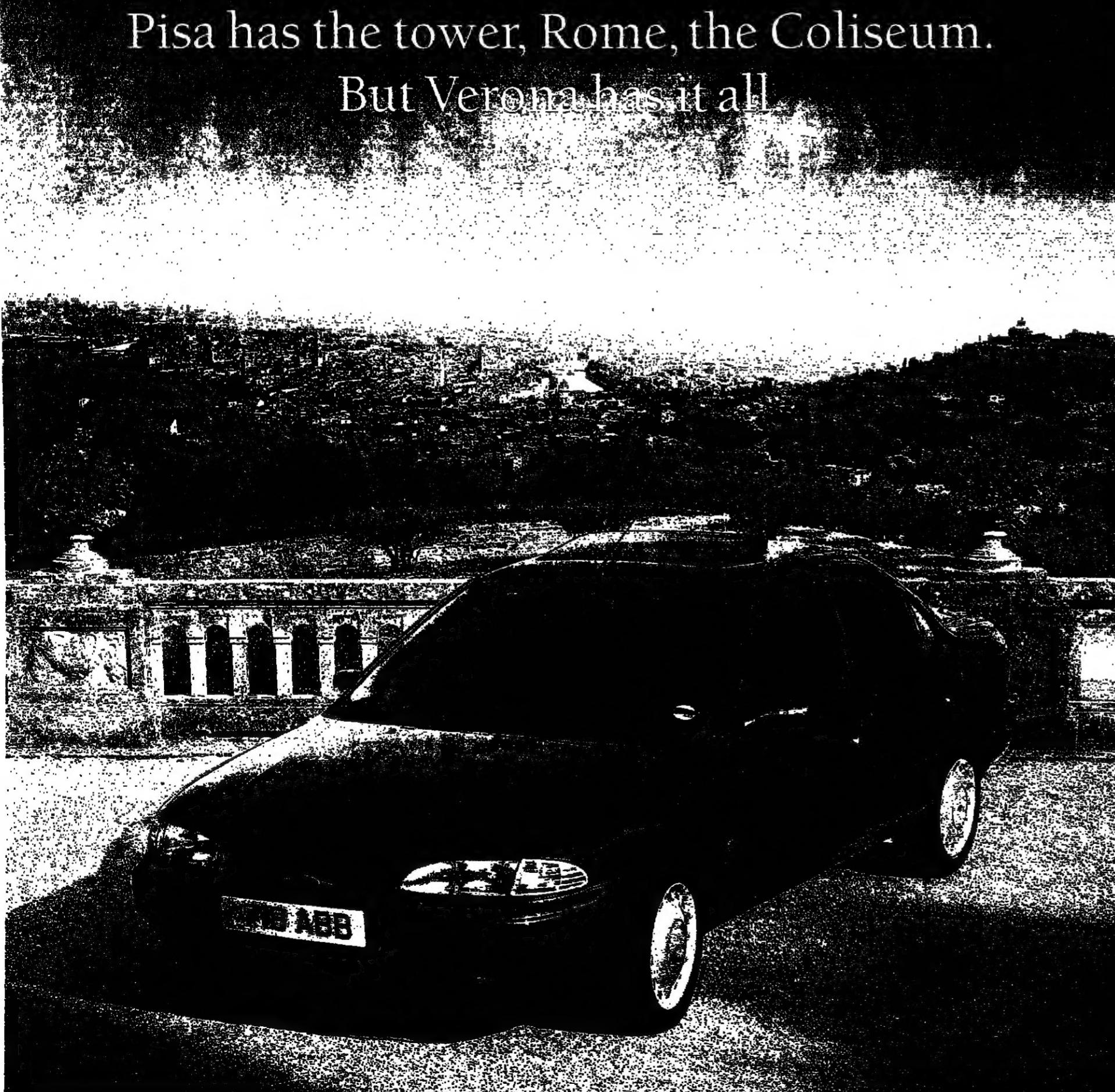
Such thoughts are an atavistic throwback to a harsher time when man battled the wolf for survival through harsh winters and drought-stricken summers.

For centuries wolves, both real and imaginary, have run through the core of French rural mythology and, like the shadowy beast preying on the sheep of Larzac, they are running still.



French hunters on the plateau of Larzac, in the Massif Central, prepare to track down a wolf blamed for the death of more than 60 sheep

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Princess Caroline wins £78,000 in libel case

FROM MICHAEL KALLENBACH IN BONN

PRINCESS CAROLINE of Monaco won DM180,000 (£78,000) yesterday in a libel action against the German magazine *Bunte*.

Princess Caroline had appealed against a DM30,000 award by a lower court over an "interview" in *Bunte* which told of her "hate of the world and search for happiness". *Bunte* also printed a photograph of her, her son and a friend with the caption, "I have a family once again". Princess Caroline said the article was inaccurate.



Princess Caroline took action against magazine

Netanyahu
Hezbollah
B

£16m plan for tunnel to Paris fountains

BY BEN MACINTYRE

TWO French entrepreneurs have developed plans for a pedestrian tunnel under the Place de la Concorde in Paris as a showcase for art and fashion that would also enable visitors to appreciate the fountains in the middle of the traffic-choked square without danger to life and limb.

Ten million tourists visit the Concorde every year, but to get to the central island's obelisk and fountains — the main one was completed in 1840 — they must first run the gauntlet of motorists who tend to regard zebra crossings merely as decoration.

The proposed tunnel, the brainchild of Eric Naon, an economist, and Marc Pauzié, an art historian, is part of a plan to restore decayed fountains, known as the "Fountains of Seas and Rivers". To negotiate the surrounding sea of traffic, the tunnel would stretch 250 yards from the Tuilleries gardens to the Champs-Elysées, with an exit next to the fountains.

Jean-Michel Wilmotte, an architect, has produced draft plans for a 30ft-wide tunnel which would double as a subterranean art museum and fashion gallery. The nearby museums holding exhibitions could also show paintings in the tunnel as an aperitif to the main attraction.

Building the tunnel would cost an estimated Fr120 million (£16 million). M Naon and M Pauzié say they hope to raise two thirds of the cash from private companies, including Paris fashion houses which could use the tunnel as an underground display case for haute couture.

André Ghonon, a spokesman for the Paris Mayor's office, told *Liberation* that the idea was innovative, adding: "It is one thing to say it and another to do it."

Next week a French commercial court will decide the fate of Eurotunnel unless the Anglo-French operator of the Channel Tunnel can come to a refinancing agreement with its 22 banks over payments on a £8.4 billion debt.

The Government and French businesses are understandably wary of committing themselves to building any more large tunnels at the moment.

Death at Ukraine reactor

Kiev: Two accidents in three hours have hit one of Ukraine's five nuclear power stations, killing a man, causing contamination and creating fresh worries about safety, ten years after the Chernobyl disaster.

Viktor Stovbun, a senior official at Ukraine's nuclear power authority, Derzhatom, said a worker died of burns and other injuries when a pipe carrying steam broke and struck him on Wednesday at the Khmelnytsky station, 180 miles west of Kiev.

Then, leaking water contaminated a nitrogen storage area. The second incident rated one on the zero-to-seven international scale of nuclear "events". The reactor is closed for maintenance. (Reuters)

Refugees 'doped'

Madrid: Spain has deported 103 refugees, mainly Africans, and secretly used a sedative to make them easier to expel in a blatant disregard for human rights, Amnesty International claimed. (AP)

Suspects held

Potsdam: Two more men were arrested in connection with the June 16 attack by suspected neo-Nazis on black Britons, the state attorney's office said. Another man was charged this week. (AP)

Klaus wins vote

Prague: The Czech Republic's new minority Government, led by Vaclav Klaus, won a confidence vote in parliament, ending three weeks' uncertainty and allowing the coalition to launch legislation. (AFP)

Spain pay freeze

Madrid: Government employees' wages will be frozen next year to help to reduce Spain's deficit and meet requirements for joining the European currency, an Economy Ministry official said. (AP)

End of the line

Moscow: Passenger and freight trains on the Trans-Siberian railway, Russia's oldest and longest line, were halted when electricity was cut because of non-payment of £6 million in bills. (AFP)



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'Israel wants to get out of Lebanon provided we could guarantee the security'

Netanyahu offers peace if Hezbollah gives up arms

Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's right-wing Prime Minister, threw down a peace challenge to President Assad of Syria yesterday by offering to pull his occupying troops out of southern Lebanon in exchange for peace along the northern Israeli border, to be guaranteed by the disarming of Hezbollah (the Party of God).

The far-reaching plan, known as Lebanon First, was first outlined in an interview with *The Times* and later split out privately to Dennis Ross, the US peace envoy, who was in Syria this week.

"Both countries have a vested interest in building confidence towards the ultimate resolution of the Syrian-Israeli dispute," Mr Netanyahu told me. "I think Lebanon is a good place to start resolving that dispute."

He emphasised that rather than any specified period of calm in Galilee being necessary to persuade him to pull out the estimated 2,500 Israeli troops, assurance was vital that Hezbollah could no longer attack. "This is a matter not of declarations, but capabilities," he said. "Any settlement must remove the capability of Hezbollah, or at the very least disarm it, as all the other militias in Lebanon have been disarmed."

Sipping iced tea and brimming with assurance despite continued wrangling among religious parties inside his hardline coalition, Israel's youngest Prime Minister also disclosed plans for his first official trip to Europe, in September. The visit takes in France, Germany and probably Britain and Ireland in Israel's term holding the presidency of the European Union. "Europe will have an important role in creating a different climate in the Middle East towards peace," he said.

Mr Netanyahu acknowledged with a degree of satisfaction that, although his Government had been in office barely 30 days, he had already confounded many of the sceptics who had "demonised" his position and stilled some of the initial panic-stricken reaction in the Arab world, which was convinced that his narrow

Israel's Prime Minister is in confident mood despite the bickering within his coalition. Christopher Walker reports from Jerusalem



defeat of Shimon Peres, the Labour leader, would return the region to conflict.

"Every time I meet foreign leaders, they are sort of taken by surprise that I mean what I say. And once they understand that, they usually feel a sense of relief that there is actually going to be genuine progress, albeit careful and guarded, which is what I was elected to do," the Likud leader said. "It is not a tactic. It is the substance of our position."

The 46-year-old Prime Minister described for the first time the importance of his meeting in Cairo last week with President Mubarak, whose warmth surprised even Egyptian officials.

"It was important because it served to acquaint us with each other, and even more importantly it brought home the message that what we seek is genuine progress based on reciprocity," he said. "And that reciprocity is not a trick to stall progress, but a method to achieve it."

Mr Netanyahu had harsh words for those on the Right, including senior members of his own party, who have criticised his decision this week to sanction the start of

ministerial-level talks with the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, who met David Levy, the Foreign Minister, in Gaza on Tuesday.

"I find both on the Right and on the Left, there is this inability to take our words at face value," Mr Netanyahu complained. "It is assumed that always, somewhere, there is a trick. We were not elected to stop the peace process, we were elected to improve it to negotiate better, to insist on security, to build a more solid framework of relationships than just empty declarations of peace that do not materialise themselves in practical life."

"We want a peace without buses exploding, and we mean that. We expect the Palestinian side to fulfil their obligations on security. They did not in the past, but I think there is a better chance they will do it now."

He acknowledged that mutual distrust between Israel and Syria was high and exacerbated by his Government's refusal to abandon sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights. He offered the Lebanon First initiative as an important step towards restoring the type of confidence

needed for resolution of the overall dispute.

It was bizarre, he argued forcefully, that President Assad should want him to sit down to negotiate over Golan with the result of the talks already a foregone conclusion.

"The whole point of negotiations is about how to resolve competing views, and not to pre-determine the outcome."

"It remains to be seen whether Syria genuinely wants us to withdraw from Lebanon [where Syria has 40,000 occupying troops]. If it does, I do not see a particular problem to facilitate it," Mr Netanyahu said, speaking of the Israeli-occupied buffer zone that has been in existence since 1985.

He added, in what diplomatic observers later described as an unexpected ray of hope in what had seemed a bleak future for any impending resumption of stalled Israeli-Syrian negotiations: "It is perfectly possible to arrive at an understanding [about occupied southern Lebanon], Syria and Lebanon say they want Israel out of Lebanon. Israel wants to get out of Lebanon provided we could guarantee the security of our northern settlements."

Present on details of the scheme, which would be popular with an Israeli public anxious about the continuing loss of life among its young soldiers in Lebanon, Mr Netanyahu responded: "If the threat against our northern border were removed, we have absolutely no reason to be in Lebanon. We do not covet an inch of Lebanese territory, we do not have any aspirations regarding Lebanon, we have only one desire — that is, to safeguard our security."

Looking remarkably relaxed despite the early criticism heaped on him and more particularly his third wife Sara, by left-of-centre Israeli media, Mr Netanyahu spoke proudly of the skill with which his wife had so far performed her public functions. He brushed off the furor over "Nanigan," which has already subsided. It was noticeable that his otherwise austere



Binyamin Netanyahu: "Foreign leaders usually feel a sense of relief that there is going to be progress"

Leader rejects blame for assassination of Rabin

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER

FOR THE first time since taking office, Binyamin Netanyahu spoke passionately about Yitzhak Rabin, the Prime Minister gunned down by a right-wing extremist.

"Rabin's assassination was one of the great tragedies of modern Israel, and one that exposed a fault line that runs through our society," said Mr Netanyahu, who was elected to the premiership in May by a narrow majority.

I left reflecting on the conclusion which was reached this week by one of the top columnists in Israel, Yael Marcus in *Haaretz*: "Not everyone knows Netanyahu, and no-one knows what he is made of — but one thing is certain: he did not do what he did, did not win his victory, did not achieve his post, to blow his career and lead the State towards hell."

Cynthia Kee, page 16
Leading article, page 19

probably more rigorous than that surrounding any world leader, passionately criticised those on the Left who had tried to apportion blame for the killing on the Right as a whole, rather than on the "mad, solitary figure" who did the shooting.

"The attempt to lay the blame on the opposition like me did not find an echo throughout broad segments of society. In fact, it was a very dangerous precedent because it said you cannot disagree; you cannot argue vehemently in case some madman may share your views and may act," Mr Netanyahu said in a reference to his attacks on Rabin's peace policies while in opposition.

Mr Netanyahu argued that the critics had failed dangerously to distinguish between the views of the gunman, 25, and his "savage" actions on the night of November 4 last year.

"This attempt to use the assassination to de-legitimise half of Israeli society was a very dangerous precedent," he said. "It was the mirror image of the assassination itself. Israeli society showed itself quite mature, it shunned the assassination and equally shunned the attempt to de-legitimise the opposition because of it."

According to many left-wingers, the assassination of Rabin has been largely forgotten in official circles.

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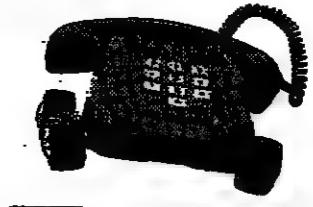
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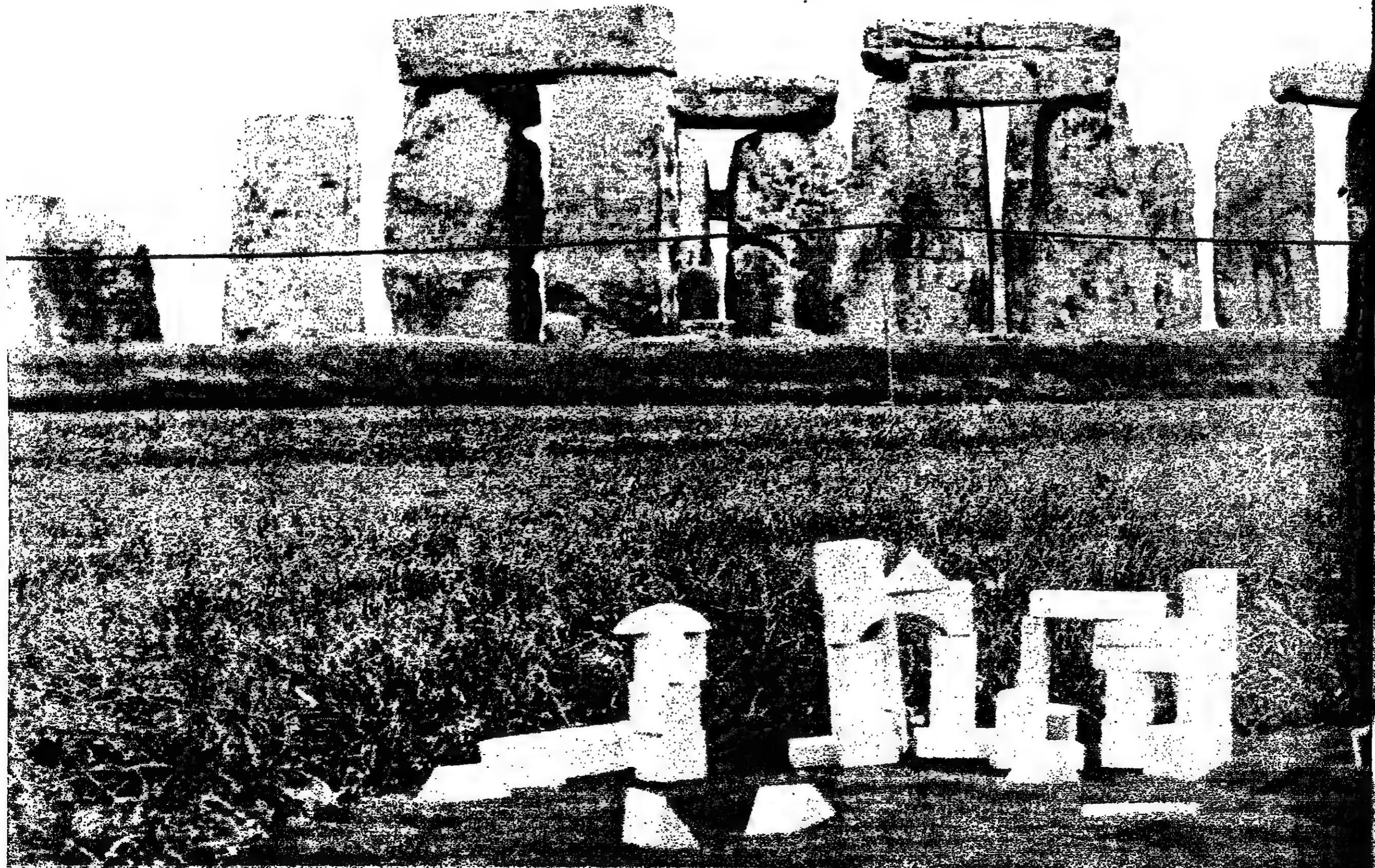
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Burundian capital under siege as resistance to coup builds up

Military installs a moderate leader to reassure Hutus

FROM SAM KILEY IN BUJUMBURA AND JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE Burundian Army yesterday deposed the Hutu President and announced the installation of Pierre Buyoya, a moderate Tutsi, as transitional head of state, what appeared to have been a bloodless coup.

Colonel Firmin Sinzoileba, the Defence Minister, announced that Mr Buyoya, an ex-President who quit after losing elections to a Hutu rival in 1993, would take over the former Belgian colony until elections could be held.

However, the United Nations said yesterday its special representative had reported that Hutu extremists had decided to retaliate against the Tutsi-led coup by laying siege to the two largest cities. Chinmaya Gharachan, a senior UN official, said that the National Council for the Defense of Democracy, the Hutu

opposition movement, had launched a raid in the south of the country and planned to besiege Bujumbura and Gitega, the second city. He said that the capital had been cut off with "roadblocks all over the place".

He added: "Apparently,

their tactic is to starve these two cities into submission and thereby affect the situation in the country as a whole."

By late yesterday afternoon, Bujumbura was silent after the army issued orders to all civilians to get off the streets, moments after Hutu traders in the central market were targeted in a grenade attack. Hutus, who have been forced to live in the forests on the hills surrounding the capital since last year, scuttled back to safety, leaving the city in the hands of the Tutsi minority. The army closed Burundi's borders and airports, and all routes leading out of the capital, cut international telephone links, and imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew.

The appointment of Mr Buyoya, a former major who took power in a coup in 1989, was clearly an attempt to appoint a Tutsi head of state who would be acceptable to the Hutus, who make up 85 per cent of the population. His credibility stems from his acceptance of the election of Melchior Ndadaye, who was murdered in a failed coup three months into his tenure.

But 5,000 Tutsi youths yesterday paraded through the capital shouting anti-Buyoya slogans, angry at the appointment of a man they see as having sold out to Hutus bent on annihilating Tutsis.

Salim Ahmed Salim, the Organisation of African Unity's Secretary-General, issued an unusually belligerent statement before the coup, saying that any attempt to take power illegally would be met by force. But the quiet appointment of Mr Buyoya may allow the OAU to avoid sending peacekeepers to a country where 150,000 have died in violence since 1993.

The nations that have the armies, the rapid-reaction capability, the logistics, are First World democracies and their national interest is not at stake in Africa," said one senior UN official.

"This is a situation where you have to go in combat mode, and that means you are running risks."

UN says West reluctant to supply peacekeepers

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE United Nations is struggling to assemble a 20,000-strong multinational force to establish buffer zones and "safe areas" in Burundi if genocide breaks out.

Senior UN officials complain that the main Western countries able to mount large-scale military intervention have shown no political will to provide troops. So far only six African countries — Chad, Ethiopia, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia — have said they will risk their soldiers to prevent an ethnic bloodbath between Burundi's rival Tutsi and Hutu tribes.

"We have to move very quickly before everything blows up in our faces," said Kofi Annan, head of UN peacekeeping. "As it is, history will judge us rather severely if the political will to act."

UN peacekeeping planners

said last year that the Great Lakes region, which saw about one million people killed in Rwanda in 1994, was teetering on the edge of a new genocide. Officials have been trying since March to put together an international force to head off new massacres.

Of 87 countries approached for troops, however, only 17 responded and five of the responses were negative. No major Western nation offered troops, although some, like Britain and the United States, promised logistical support.

The nations that have the armies, the rapid-reaction capability, the logistics, are First World democracies and their national interest is not at stake in Africa," said one senior UN official.

"This is a situation where you have to go in combat mode, and that means you are running risks."



Pierre Buyoya, a former President, is the new man at the helm in Burundi

Tutsi ruler rekindles hope

BY MARK HURD

rundian politics, by first overthrowing the radical Tutsi dictator, Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, in 1987, and opening up the field to multiparty democracy seven years later.

Major Buyoya held elections in 1993 knowing his Uprona Party, which draws its main support from the minority Tutsis, would lose because of the tribal make-up of the political parties. But, rare among military leaders, he accepted defeat by the

country's first Hutu President, Melchior Ndadaye, and retired to a modest villa on the edge of Bujumbura.

Yesterday's coup, in the absence of any rapid decisions with regard to foreign intervention in Burundi, is the best thing that could have happened in the circumstances. What is now required is time for the new regime to prove that national unity and peace really can be achieved. Few believe it can.

Opposition unites to force out Bhutto

FROM ZAHID HUSSAIN IN KARACHI

THE Government of Benazir Bhutto faces the most serious threat yet to its survival as an alliance of 15 leading opposition political parties prepares to launch a nationwide movement against the 33-month-old administration.

The alliance led by the former Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, said yesterday that it would use all means to oust the Government and strive for fresh elections under a neutral caretaker administration. The opposition leaders, who met in Islamabad, called on President Leghari to fulfil his constitutional obligation and dismiss what they described as a corrupt and inept Government.

Significantly, the opposition move has come at a time when Pakistan is experiencing its worst recession for two decades and the country's economic life has been crippled by a series of strikes by traders, industrialists and transporters over the past four weeks. The imposition of £800 million in additional taxes last month has triggered widespread public outrage and worsened an already volatile political situation.

The newly formed opposition alliance hopes to exploit the increasing public discontent to strike at the beleaguered Government.

High taxes are not likely to extricate the country from its

worst financial crisis and most economists predict economic collapse by September or October, when Pakistan is re-

quired to pay more than £300 million in foreign debt servicing.

The situation seems to have worsened because the International Monetary Fund is reluctant to come to Paki-

stan's aid.

The deteriorating law and order situation has added to

Miss Bhutto's predicament. A series of bomb explosions, which rocked the country's biggest province of Punjab and killed more than 80 people since the beginning of the year, has shaken the Government.

Appeal for calm as Tamils deny train bombing

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DEHILWA

THE Sri Lankan Government urged the nation to be calm yesterday after a calamitous week of killings that could threaten a Sinhalese backlash against the Tamil minority.

The death toll from Wednesday's bomb attack on a packed commuter train near Colombo, the capital, rose to more than 70 — most of them young, including some children.

The Tamil guerrilla group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), denied responsibility. In a statement from its London office, it accused the Government of trying to whip up anti-Tamil emotions by blaming them. "It is not the policy of the LTTE to attack civilian targets," it said.

Police and forensic scientists continued to pick through the twisted metal of the train for clues last night. Belongings were scattered around two shattered carriages and torn, bloodstained clothes of the dead and injured littered the platform of Dehiliwa station, seven miles south of Colombo, and along the grass bank beside the track. Last night the Government announced compensation of 10,000 rupees (£125) to the families of those killed.

In a nationwide address, President Kumaratunga appealed to people not to "fall prey to the scheming tactics" of the Tigers, whose aim, she said, was to provoke an ethnic backlash.

□ Rebels accused: The Tigers inflict a huge amount of suffering on Tamil civilians.

According to a group of moderate Tamil university teachers who have been forced into hiding for fear of reprisals from the guerrillas (Eve-Ann Prentiss writes).

In a damning report, University Teachers for Human Rights says that Tamil civilians are coerced into paying the Tigers' money that they cannot afford, and that children are lured away from schools against their parents' wishes, to fight.



Kumaratunga: warning against backlash

NEWS IN BRIEF

Death toll rises to six in Turkish jail fast

Istanbul: Three more hunger strikers died yesterday in Turkish jails, bringing the toll this week to six (Andrew Finkel writes). Nearly 300 prisoners were refusing all nourishment last night as the ten-week protest over prison conditions worsened.

Saket Kazan, Turkey's Minister of Justice, said the Government had made concessions. He said many prisoners now had weapons. The hunger-strikers' main demand is that a high-security prison known as "the coffin" in the city of Eskisehir, should be shut down.

In one of his first acts as a new minister this month, Mr Kazan suspended the transfer of prisoners to Eskisehir. He has refused, however, to close the jail, which he describes as "being well above European standards".

Hijacker seized in Algeria

Rabat: Algerian security forces yesterday overpowered an armed hijacker who held 232 passengers hostage for six hours on board an Air Algérie flight at Oran airport in western Algeria (Mark Huband writes). State television said nobody was harmed. It is not known if the man was linked to Algeria's Islamic militant movement, which hijacked an Air France plane to Marseilles in 1994.

Mass grave find

Lisbon: A mine-clearing team in Kwanda, northern Angola, has exhumed hundreds of skeletons, many with bullet holes, from a mass grave at a former army camp, according to reports. (AP)

Biko rejection

Johannesburg: South Africa's Constitutional Court rejected an attempt by the family of Steve Biko, the murdered anti-apartheid activist, to prevent his killers being pardoned if they confess. (Reuters)

Harsh penalty

Tehran: Thieves in Iran will lose four fingers on their right hand for a first offence under the country's new penal code. Repeat offenders face the amputation of toes or the death penalty. (AFP)

Breaking in

Copenhagen: A jailed Danish motorbike gang leader is recovering in hospital after unidentified attackers shot him in his cell after breaking into a jail, then escaping after throwing a grenade. (Reuters)

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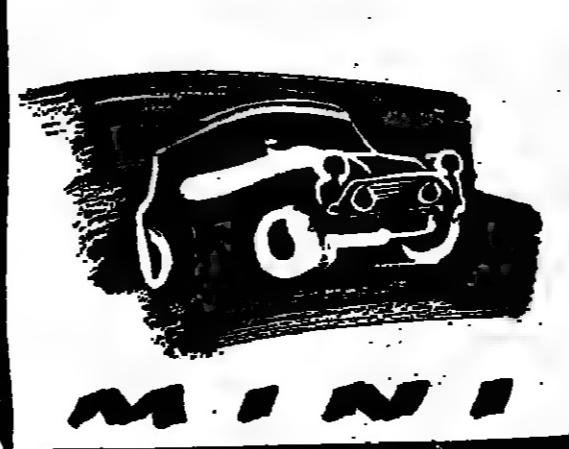
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Breakthrough as divers salvage data recorders

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

An investigation into the crash of TWA Flight 800 was close to a breakthrough last night as experts in Washington examined the aircraft's "black boxes", which were finally recovered by divers 100ft down off the coast of Long Island yesterday.

The flight data and cockpit voice recorders are seen as the best hope yet in solving the mystery of last week's crash in which all 230 passengers and crew were killed.

The crash appeared to have ripped the end off the dented and scratched data recorder,

exposing a handful of torn and dangling wires. "There was moderate damage, but we've seen much worse than this," said Dr Bernard Loeb of the National Transportation Safety Board. "The tapes are being dried in our laboratories and are in good condition. We hope to have some information by the end of the day."

The voice recorder, designed to preserve up to 30 minutes of cockpit conversation, may indicate whether the crew knew of any problem before tragedy struck. For its part, the data recorder is

designed to log altitude, speed and engine information for up to 25 hours and could reveal the presence of a mechanical failure.

Investigators in Washington were cautious about what would be found. In the final analysis, they said, the two bright red cases may hold less than one second's worth of data.

The early failure of the aircraft's transponder, an automatic radio transmitter which broadcasts its identity, airspeed and position, combined with the lack of a mayday distress signal from the pilots, led aviation experts to believe that the explosion, whatever its cause, may have resulted in total electrical failure on board.

The boxes, about the size of a car battery, use slightly more electricity than a standard portable computer. Later models have small capacitors which can keep them running briefly after an accident, but those on Flight 800 are thought to have been older and did not include the power storage units.

Capacitors are mandatory in Europe and the Federal Aviation Administration has been considering the same rule in America. Had the TWA boxes included the unit, recording time could have been extended by about one-tenth of a second. In the case of a bomb or a missile, the value of this fleeting extra moment is thought to be negligible in establishing cause. If the crash was caused by mechanical failure, however, every slim piece of information might count.

It was a small submarine and divers from the *Grasp*, a US Navy recovery ship, that finally retrieved the jet's flight data and cockpit voice recorders. The *Grasp* also has two cranes, each capable of lifting 75 tonnes, for the recovery of large chunks of wreckage from the seabed.

With as many as 120 divers working in shifts around the clock, officials describe the week-long salvage operation as a well-oiled machine. The divers, who carry hand-held sonars and video cameras, face twisted metal and trails of electrical wire from the airliner. Visibility is about 15 ft. The divers have also been equipped with an experimental laser able to locate

pieces of the airliner and then sends "hard-hat" divers, supplied with air through a pipe from the surface, down to investigate.

The *USS Oak Hill*, a multi-purpose amphibious US Navy vessel with a flooded welldeck and two helicopters that can ferry wreckage to shore, has taken up position as the on-scene command post.

Side-scanning sonar towed by two other ships — the *Pirouette* and the *Rude* — is being used to map the debris on the seabed, and the *USS Grasp* is anchored directly over the centre of the wreckage. The *Grasp* uses remote-operated vehicles with video cameras and sonar to locate

the divers have also been equipped with an experimental laser able to locate bodies.

Pilotless subs and sonar prove worth

FROM JAMES BONE
IN NEW YORK

THE recovery of the "black boxes" of TWA Flight 800 is the result of a high-tech search in the waters off Long Island using such sophisticated equipment as pilotless submarines and an experimental body-locating laser.

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the divers have also been equipped with an experimental laser able to locate bodies.

Doctor 'gave lover HIV shot'

FROM JAMES BONE
IN NEW YORK

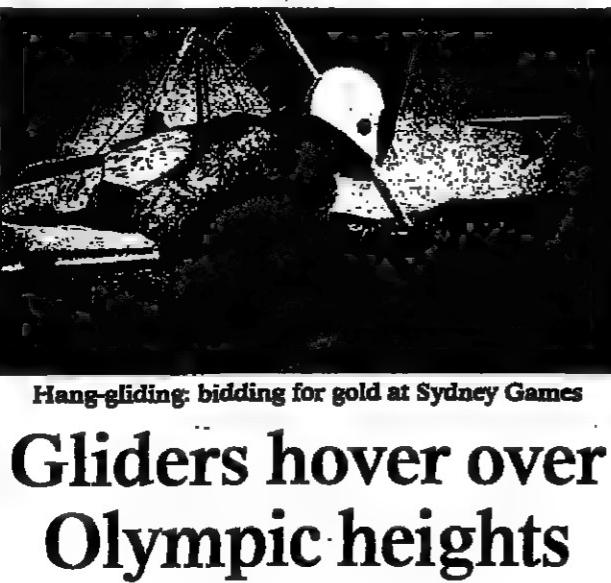
A DOCTOR, fearing the end of a decade-long affair with a nurse, has been charged with trying to kill the woman by injecting her with a "vitamin shot" that contained HIV-tainted blood from a dying AIDS patient.

Dr Richard Schmidt, 48, from Lafayette, Louisiana, succeeded in infecting his mistress, 33, the prosecutor says. A father of two, described by his wife as a "good man", Dr Schmidt is being held without bail for attempted murder.

The prosecutor wants to try him for murder, but cannot do so because his victim has not yet died.

Dr Schmidt's lawyer insists that his client's former mistress is "out to try and ruin his life with this charge". But the prosecutor says the woman was lying in bed on the night of August 4, 1994, when Dr Schmidt entered the darkened room and said he wanted to give her a shot of Vitamin B12 for her fatigue. He allegedly injected her despite her refusal.

The couple never had sex again and, about two months later, the woman began to complain of trouble with her lymph nodes and pain in her eyes. Last December the woman was diagnosed as HIV-positive. DNA tests on the virus allegedly matched those of a sample of infected blood taken from a dying AIDS patient by Dr Schmidt on the day of the "vitamin" injection.



Gliders hover over Olympic heights

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN ATLANTA

WITH snooker now being spoken of as a possible Olympic sport, other activities are pushing for inclusion in the Games, ranging from surfing to karate, lawn bowls and roller skating.

Juan Samaranch, head of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), was reported yesterday to be keen on snooker and pushing for its inclusion in the 2004 Olympics.

The IOC will meet at the end of the Atlanta Games to consider which new sports, if any, can be welcomed into the Olympic family. Sydney, site of the 2000 Games, has already made arrangements to accommodate the triathlon and the oriental sport of taekwon-do.

Sydney intends to limit the Games to 10,000 athletes, 1,000 fewer than Atlanta, in the belief that the Olympics are becoming unwieldy. Mr Samaranch likes to say that "the bus is full — someone will have to get off before someone else gets on".

A Sydney spokesman said yesterday that the city is near to some "terrifically tall cliffs which would be well suited to hang-gliding".

In view of all this, cricket, dropped in 1900, may feel that it is time to return to the Olympic crease.

Reports, pages 39-42, 44



Flight 800's "black boxes" are laid out for inspection at the National Transportation Safety Board in Washington

Cockpit tape could hold bomb clue

BY HARVEY ELLIOTT
AIR CORRESPONDENT

A MILLISECOND of sound on the tape of the cockpit voice recorder could be enough to establish whether TWA Flight 800 was brought down by a bomb.

Before the power was cut, investigators hope, there could be sufficient information to enable them to obtain some indication of what happened in the last few seconds before the passengers and crew of the Boeing 747-100 were killed.

The "black boxes" are actually bright red, so that they can be picked out in wreckage after a crash. The idea of recording automatically all the main movements of an aircraft from its height and speed to the engine power and the

position of the control surfaces was developed in Britain in the late 1950s by an electronics expert, Kenneth Dobson, and first displayed at the Farnborough air show in 1961.

It is now compulsory for all large commercial aircraft to carry such recorders. They are made of titanium which surrounds mineral wool and cork packing designed to protect the mass of computer chips which monitor what is happening throughout the aircraft's vital parts and then record it onto wire or magnetic tape.

However, Tony Skinner, a former air accident investigator, said last night that he did not think the flight data recorder (FDR) would reveal much. "All it will show is that at a certain moment all electrical power was cut, either by an explosion or by an explosive decompression on board."

But the second "black box", the cockpit voice recorder, which is stored alongside the FDR in the tail of the aircraft, is more likely to provide a clue to the cause of the crash. This has four channels which record what the crew says to air traffic controllers on the ground and, more important, all the sounds in the aircraft, including the cockpit.

If this detected the first shock waves of a bomb blast, the trace will be compared with the "signatures" on the tape taken from the PanAm Boeing 747 which was blown up over Lockerbie in December 1988 and the Air India passenger aircraft which crashed off Ireland in 1985.

Clinton visits grieving relatives

BY TOM RHODES

PRESIDENT CLINTON, visiting the mourning families of those who died on TWA Flight 800, announced new airline security measures last night.

Emphasising that sabotage had not been identified as the cause of the crash, the White House said Mr Clinton would appoint Vice-President Al Gore to head a commission to draw up proposals within 45 days.

The measures would include the screening of all luggage on domestic flights within America and the expanded use of the CTX 5000 bomb-detection scanner now being tested at Atlanta and San Francisco airports.

With a white ribbon of remembrance on his lapel, Mr Clinton travelled by motorcade from Kennedy airport to the Ramada Plaza Hotel for a private meeting with the relatives. His message was reassurance that the Government was doing everything in its power to find all the bodies and an explanation of the crash.

The decision to fly to New York en route to the Olympic Games in Atlanta ended days of debate among senior members of the Administration as to how Mr Clinton personally should respond to the tragedy.

Earlier this week Mr Clinton, for instance, had declined an invitation to the memorial in Pennsylvania for 16 members of a high-school French class who had died. It was a deliberate move by the White House to both avoid diverting attention from the investigation and also prevent any possible criticism.

Paris President Chirac sent a Cabinet minister to New York yesterday to comfort the families of victims of last week's TWA disaster amid mounting anger among French relatives at the slow recovery of the bodies.

Anne-Marie Idrac, Secretary of State for Transport, was to meet families of the 48 French citizens who died in the explosion. The relatives are staying at an airport hotel waiting to take home the bodies of their loved ones.

The minister would also due to meet American officials in charge of the investigation into the crash. (Reuters)

Bronze means happy

BY QUENTIN LETTS

OLYMPIC bronze medallists are likely to be happier than winners of silver medals, psychologists claimed yesterday.

A study of the reactions of bronze and silver medallists suggested that whereas silver medalists feel a sense of despair at having just missed the top place, bronze medalists are delighted to be part of the medal awards ceremony, feel less pressure of failure and reflect that it is far better to have come third than unwarded fourth.

Victoria Husted Medvec, a business psychologist at Northwestern University, said: "We examined film footage of the Barcelona Games and studied the reactions of 41 athletes on the stands during the medal ceremony and during interviews afterwards. The silver medalists were significantly less happy than the people who won bronze."

The film footage was assessed by a scientifically controlled range of viewers who marked the reactions of the athletes on a scale of one to ten. The bronze winners waved their medals and smiled. Silver winners were more likely to look exhausted and depressed.

The Greco-Roman wrestling this week presented an example of an inconsolable silver medalist. Matt Gaffari of the US, who lost the super heavyweight final narrowly to Russia's Aleksandr Karelin, broke down on the medal podium.



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David Heathcoat-Amory: "If a single currency is held to be such a good idea, I want them to tell me why."

Turned off by a summer of ugly feet

THERE is surely nothing on earth more ugly than the human foot, and nothing more calculated to its utmost revoltingness than the miserable sandal.

Returning from an otherwise delightful holiday last week, I was overjoyed to find it raining at Heathrow. For

two weeks I had been surrounded by holidaying English feet, gnarled and hairy but besandaled and on shameless show. A winter of corns, dry skin, ingrown nails, blisters and athlete's foot had, apparently, prepared these pedal protuberances for a fortnight of

summer's foreign vermin fest, when I learned that sandals were "back".

On the catwalks of Milan, men in suits wore sandalled feet. Fashion writers called it "cool" and "sensible". Spread across double pages in magazines was Sir Randolph Fiennes, our greatest living explorer, holding a hideous two-strapped leather thing and suggesting, albeit obliquely, that it was indispensable to the success of solo missions to the South Pole.

I once had great respect for the man. From now on I shall regard every toe taken from him by frostbite as a blow struck by Nature in the cause of elegance and modesty.

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Philip Howard



■ Nothing in the Games is new: not even the cynical press coverage

Coca-Cola is best. Pindar introduced his Olympian Odes with, "Water is the greatest". And he was performing the prize-giving ceremony for Hieron, Tyrant of Syracuse, whose entry "Winner-Bringer" had just won gold in the Olympic Games flat race for horses in 476 BC. But we have improved on all that archaic stuff. So our Olympian Ode in 1996 has to start with Coke, the corporate sponsor of these games. Although the sacred poet (hired back on his high horse) may understandably prefer Pepsi, without even bringing into contention champagne or Greene King bitter and other more inspirational liquids.

Coca-Cola is best. The sponsors say so. It must be true. And gold, like fire burning in the night, outshines all possessions that magnify men's pride. But if you want to puff the greatest games, look no farther for any star brighter than the sun, or for any contest greater than Atlanta. And in fact, in spite of the Coke, plus ça change plus this is still the same old Olympics.

For pace soppy "Baron" Pierre de Coubertin and *Chariots of Fire*, what has always mattered at the Olympics is winning, not taking part. Pindar, their first (Doric) columnist, wrote about the losers "skulking furiously down the back alleys at home, shamed by their loss". But the winner, though a mortal and therefore "a dream of a shadow", bathes in "a ray of sunshine come as a gift from the gods". At Atlanta he or she mounts a podium for national anthem, medal and five minutes' television fame. All that matters is being *aristos*, going for gold.

Athletes fuss about their diet. But they always have. This year at Atlanta the Chinese are complaining about their official menu of spare ribs, jumboburgers and Coke. But 25 centuries ago one of the sprinters insisted on training on a diet of figs, because they made him run faster. Beach volleyball is the new sport this year, with maidens in bright raiment throwing a ball at each other, and provoking the newspapers to suggestive puns about Silicon Valley. But there is nothing new under the Olympic sun. Beach ball played by scantly clad maidens may seem new to Atlanta, but it is one of the oldest games. Princess Nausicaa and her maidens were playing it on the beach at Phaeacis when they were interrupted by Odysseus, the first streaker in history.

Our man from *The Times* at the Atlanta Olympics, Quentin Lens, is being given a roasting by the American media for allegedly negative reporting. Instead of praising the winners in the style of Pindar, he and his colleagues have reported the traffic gridlock in downtown Atlanta, the Olympic computer that gurgitates such unpermissible statistics as a heavyweight boxer 6cm high, and other cock-up and chaos inevitable at such a crowded and contentious meeting. There is a precedent for shooting the Pindar. In 1861, our special correspondent to Washington, William Howard Russell, made himself so unpopular with Americans by his candid account of the shambles and panic at the Battle of Bull Run that he had to seek sanctuary in the British Embassy.

Once Britain wins a few medals, our hacks will revert from sarcastic to Pindaric mode: "Sons of the golden track in your Nikes, my surest rule is this, When I come to your island to shower you with songs of praise." The modern Olympics may seem to be a contest for chemistry graduates, with steroids running and splashing against cortisone. But the ancient Olympics were also full of cheats. Wrestlers were called lions, from their trick of biting each other when the judges were not looking. When he was Emperor, Nero won more medals than Michelle Smith, even in events which he had not entered. Olympic athletes tripped, tugged each other's shorts (until they were made to run naked in the delusion that this would stop them juggling, took bribes, and were flogged for starting before the flag. There have always been too many silly sports, especially swimming. But when thunder wakes the little dog at 3am, it is a comfort to find the younger son watching gymnastics on the television. My boy, do not seek immortal life, but exhaust the realm of the possible. And enjoy Pindar's rapid cutting and brilliant imagery embedded in impenetrable stuff. For remember the roots of the games are very old and very gnarled.



I could murder a burger

Obsessive personalities can be found

in every country, but intense

Americans take extremes to extremes

In all the world's countries — certainly in all the very many countries I have visited or even heard of — there are people who are significantly different from the rest. Of course there are vast numbers of "differences" everywhere, from those who love broccoli and yogurt to those who skin up drainpipes, climb through windows and steal jewellery. But I am not talking about that kind of difference: I am talking about those who — in the vulgar — are so different that passers-by are tempted to tap their foreheads as they hurry past. And for reasons I cannot fathom, and I think are not fathomable, almost all of these are to be found in the United States.

Do you remember the tragedy of Jim Jones — "Jonestown" — when this savage madman told his followers to drink poison and that they would therefore go to heaven, whereupon they drank it? Do you remember the similar horror at Waco, when another nut and his followers burnt themselves to death? Do you know that there was another of these sieges at Ruby Ridge, Idaho? What inspires American people — and people in significant numbers — to believe that they can be made immortal if they follow an obvious lunatic?

I have recently come back from America, where I found myself watching from the wings another of these self-immolations, though happily this one gave up without bloodshed. Happily, yes, but when I tell you that the group had been holding out for eighty-one days, and every day could have been a massacre, surely you will agree that there is something about the United States which is not to be found elsewhere. (No, I have not forgotten Dunblane, but that was greatly different from the American bloodlettings.)

Mind you, when the men and women of the stand-off had fled out peacefully, there was much more to come, because the filers, it turned out, had fled out with millions of dollars in bogus cheques, and when the judge started proceedings, the filers threatened to kill him. So if you were thinking that the Freemen (that is what they call themselves) should be patted on the head, you should take care that they don't bite you. For those amazing people who held out for 81 days were, in blunt British terms, a pack of more or less dotty libertarians. Outside, the

lonies and semi-lonies were having a high old time; the publisher of the far-right (and how far-right) magazine *Free America* was saying "It's just another small part of what the Government keeps America divided."

Now I started by saying that the United States has peculiar ideas and is not shy of exhibiting them. But that is the terrible side of our friendly cousins. There is, of course, a side to America which exhibits no violence. But I am not just measuring the violent side and the peaceful side. I want to examine another extraordinary facet of the United States. It comes under the heading of intensity. And I know no other country that uses enormous intensity not just on its dark side but on the bright side as well. (I once listed countries by the number of murders by handguns a year — the list read: Britain 33; Sweden 36; Switzerland 97; Canada 128; Australia 13; Japan 60, and the United States 13,220. I doubt if there has been any substantial change.)

But return to the matter of intensity. Of course, we would classify murder under the flag of intensity — what else could it be called? But the very strange thing is that American intensity is just as strong when it is contemplating murder as when it is contemplating a McDonald's, and I say that not as a grim gibe. For I shall now put the two together, and tell me whether there is a not a clear and distinct similarity between them. Between the two? Between a passion of men out of control with savage violence and others mildly asking for their fondest bun to be improved? Yes, and you might note that each of these two items from the newspapers — the story of the mad savages and the story of the popular comestible — took up the same number of pages: five.

Now for McDonald's and the precious — apparently very precious — bun. I

have to admit immediately that I have never eaten a McDonald's meal, or indeed entered one of its speckless eateries, and this goes for Burger King as well, to say nothing about Wimpy (surely the man who invented it); but before the McDonald's lawyers — I bet they have thousands and thousand of them — descend upon me, saying that I have said wicked things about their immaculate foodstuff, I must say that I do not propose to say anything at all about the nature or taste or quality of this no doubt delicious sweetmeat. All I propose to do is to discuss the almost incredible lengths that McDonald's will go to promote a new burger.

I said five pages, and I meant it. True, we are talking about what happens in the United States, but the very new American McDonald's kick-off itself is enough to make your head swim: many ordinary goods and services are helped into the market by a simple giveaway, but what would you say when you discovered (as I did) that as a promotion — promotion! — McDonald's has given away, free, fifty million dollars-worth of burgers?

The new burger (nobody has as yet discussed the possibility of throwing in an ingot of pure gold to go with the burger, but give them time) is called the Arch Deluxe, and although it has gone off pretty well, in the McDonald's boardroom there is apparently a frown or two. Hence the headlines (oh yes, in America burgers are frequently to be found in the headlines) saying "Consumers not exactly flipping for new burger", "Arch may not be much of a triumph" and "No one really knows if this sandwich will have legs".

So, solemnly, McDonald's called up the infantry: the Arch Deluxe has got its polling firm, Louis Harris and Associates, and we now have seen what we have seen. For the pollsters have announced that one quarter of the

American adult population have eaten a McDonald's Arch Deluxe. But that means (because many will have eaten more than one, and very many children have eaten lots and lots) that we must, even more solemnly, say that McDonald's Arch Deluxe has been eaten by not less than 80 million people, and the end is not yet in sight.

Then the figures begin to make me reel: 69 per cent said they might eat another; 90 per cent said they would not go to McDonald's more often just because of the Arch Deluxe; 60 per cent prefer the Big Mac to the Arch Deluxe. And do you remember that incredible figure — fifty million dollars-worth free to promote Arch Deluxe? Well, stop remembering the fifty million dollars, because McDonald's has announced that it is going to spend two hundred million dollars to promote the Arch Deluxe.

And this, dear readers, is nothing but a bun. A bun, moreover, that is not something amazingly new; it is, after all, what odds like me like a hamburger, viz. chopped steak, a bit of salad and two buns to hold the steak. In even more familiar language, it is a sandwich. I have nothing against a sandwich, but surely nobody would buy one because of its startling newness. Well you and I wouldn't, but 80 million have already done so.

And at last I come round from where I started. Well-cooked steak. I grant you, it is hardly a subject to discuss when murder has just been making the running, but please go back to where I started. My theme was intensity, which I think — no, I am sure — is woven into all or most countries, but most deeply and darkly into the fabric of America.

Terrible things happen in almost all countries. But the United States takes the prize. It is not just Waco, Ruby Ridge, Jonesborough and the vast numbers more. It is something — as I call it — like intensity. And, as I say, it has also a sunlit side. I repeat: all countries have their eccentricities, even if only in their religion. But the United States, I firmly believe, is absolutely *sui generis* in this manner. And when you think that the matter in hand includes not only hamburgers, but ghastly multiple murders, surely it is that unique intensity which makes vast pools of blood, and simultaneously makes

chopped steak.

Sixteen years on, Andalucia is still struggling economically. It is Spain's poorest province, with an unemployment rate of 28 per cent, and it is beset by corruption. As an industrially deprived area within the EU, it has received large injections of European aid, which have opened up its transport system and helped to develop tourism. It continues to press for a larger share of Spain's wealth, and although it has not yet succeeded, there is little evidence that this has encouraged thoughts of pressing for greater independence. The Nationalist Party has rarely won more than a small percentage of votes. Andalucia remains determinedly socialist.

Parallels with Scotland are hard to resist, and those who cite Catalonia, Spain's wealthiest province, as a model for devolution might find it more instructive to look at Andalucia. However poor it remains, the principle of decentralisation seems as natural as a love of bullfighting.

For those who visit Andalucia in search of something more than the *corrida* or the sangria-drenched resorts of the Costa del Sol, there is much to admire about the independence of spirit in an area which still strikes one as remarkably free from European influence. The little whitewashed villages, high in the sierras, are as much Moorish as Spanish. Despite the new roads, they seem almost as isolated as they were when the British writer Gerald Brenan went to live there in the 1920s. Explaining to the villagers that he had served in the Great War, he found that they all assumed he had been fighting the Moors.

Andalucia is now a part of modern Europe, but it retains what Brenan described as "a certain modicum of anarchy and non-compliance". And he added: "It is still true that south of the Pyrenees one finds a society that puts the deeper needs of human nature before the technical organisation that is required to provide a higher standard of living." That may explain why it prefers to seek its own route to economic viability, rather than the violence and extremism of its Basque compatriots.

Home rule for the matadors

Magnus Linklater

on the bullfights and bombs of Andalucia

Undeterred by ETA bombs, the tourists are packing into the *Plaza de Toros* in Puerto Banus, just along the coast from Marbella. They have come to see two of the season's more glamorous matadors: Christina Sanchez, Spain's only female bullfighter, and Manuel Diaz who has adopted the name of the great El Cordobes and claims to be his natural son; he certainly has his good looks, if not all his skill.

Over the next two hours they kill six bulls between them: two of them well and cleanly, four indifferently. The crowd rises to Ms Sanchez as she executes her first *faena* immaculately, then bows and whistles as she struggles to despatch her second bull, failing time after time to thrust the sword home. Finally, and humiliatingly, a male torero finishes the job for her. The general view is that she was unlucky with the animals she faced, but for the more macho Spaniards in the audience, it probably served to confirm their opinion that a woman has no place in the ring. Certainly, for sheer flamboyance, it was El Cordobes who stole the show.

Bullfighting either disgusts or thrills, and often it does both. Those in our party who had never seen a *corrida* before left faintly depressed by an evening which seemed all too often to consist of slaughter by routine rather than ritual. But for the *aficionado*, this most politically incorrect of spectacles continues to exert an electric fascination: both because the death of a human being is always just a hair's breadth away, and because at its best it still has a dramatic intensity unequalled by any other sport. Spaniards who have been gloomily predicting the decline of bullfighting for years are instead witnessing its revival. Two or three fighters of genius, such as Jesulín de Ubrique, are once again drawing the crowds. And in the sierras of Andalucia, where we have been staying, it is so deeply embedded in the culture that to question its legitimacy is to be met with incomprehension.

But if Andalucians see nothing incongruous about celebrating death in the ring, they are nevertheless dismayed by ETA's new campaign of death on the beaches. In the past few weeks, the violence has begun spreading south and has reached the resorts of the Costa del Sol. Despite the arrest of a suspected ETA cell this week, the explosion at Reus may signal an escalation which could strike at the heart of tourism, the only industry of major significance in the area. Memories of the terror campaigns of 1979 and 1980, which led to nearly 200 deaths in Spain, are still fresh, and there is little or no sympathy with Basque separatists who believe that a resolution of violence is the only way of achieving independence.

It is not that Andalucia itself is hostile to autonomy. Like the other provinces of Spain it has adopted devolution with enthusiasm, even though it has no tradition of separate nationhood, and has never been a single entity. Indeed in 1980, when Adolfo Suárez then Spain's Prime Minister, called a referendum on Andalucia's future and suggested a slow and gradual route towards autonomy, the electorate voted against him. Nearly two-thirds voted for the faster route, turning out in larger numbers than either the Basques or the Catalans. And when, despite this, Suárez used a single poor result in Almeria to reject the vote, there was such fury that new laws had to be introduced to give the Andalucians what they wanted.

Sixteen years on, Andalucia is still struggling economically. It is Spain's poorest province, with an unemployment rate of 28 per cent, and it is beset by corruption. As an industrially deprived area within the EU, it has received large injections of European aid, which have opened up its transport system and helped to develop tourism. It continues to press for a larger share of Spain's wealth, and although it has not yet succeeded, there is little evidence that this has encouraged thoughts of pressing for greater independence. The Nationalist Party has rarely won more than a small percentage of votes. Andalucia remains determinedly socialist.

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Extra games

SEXUAL SCANDAL has reared its ugly head to add to the chaos at the Olympics. Apparently unimpressed by the traditional asceticism of competing athletes, five members of the Armenian weightlifting team were apprehended on Wednesday night after an incident with a prostitute.

They were arrested following a business transaction with a woman. The discussion was about an exchange of services," explained Bob Brennan, press chief for the organising committee.

The hairy backs were left standing when a lady relieved them of \$100 and sprinted off into the night. Realising that she wasn't coming back, they reacted like grizzlies which had had their bottoms tickled, lumbering off in angry pursuit and ending up eventually at the apartment where she was hiding. They made such a ruckus when they hammered on the door that a resident phoned the police, "said the press chief, adding that they were released.

Atlanta's police have also dealt with a Tunisian boxer seized by lust who fondled "inappropriate" female tram-driver, and a couple of fencers from the Spanish team who decided to relieve them-

written by my friend Dominic Prince, who co-founded the association and sits on its board with the ginger albatross.

I wonder if Dominic, who writes of a disorganized Duchess cracking jokes about her overdraft during board meetings, ever discussed shared experiences with the Duchess — for he, too, has had his toes sucked. In *The Sun* four years ago, under the banner headline "She gave a great toe job", he talked of spending the night on a sofa with David Mellor's former lover, Antonia de Sancha. "Sucking guys' toes was all part of her mucking about . . . She was a delightfully eccentric, beautiful."

Devotees of Alexander Pope are hoping that his grotto at Twickenham can be restored. The subterranean hideaway, which was put up for sale by the Sisters of Mercy, has been bought by a school. Pope readers are relieved that property developers have not got their hands on the Thames-side site and Lord Rothschild has been looking at it with a view to his National Heritage Memorial Fund providing cash for restoration.

Track record

THERE has been a motoring accident. Involved were a Ferrari F50, one of the fastest road cars in the

department announced a new range of Poems on the Underground. One of the poems soon to adorn the trains is called *Apolo*gy, by Mimi Khalvati, while another work has been brought back by popular demand: Byron's *So we'll go no more a roving*.

Who's write?

AT THE request of Tara Palmer-Tomkinson, ski-lift partner of the Prince of Wales and according to this week's *Spectator*, an *au fait intellectuel*, PHS is eating humble pie. I suggested the other day that in the battle between her hot pants and her mind, the hot pants win every time.

As evidence, I related a story of her mistaking a soldier in the Life Guards for a man who patrols a beach. She has chastised me in newspaper and magazine columns for reproducing the story, explaining that she was in fact talking with David Hasselhoff, the Nietzsche behind the breasts and beachwear series *Baywatch*. Those heavy-clad sorts who dismiss her by her old nickname of "plank" are clearly just jealous.

For all her intelligence, however, the crispness of her prose in *The Spectator* yesterday surprised those who have encountered her across a canapé tray. A voice inside *The Spectator* confirmed that

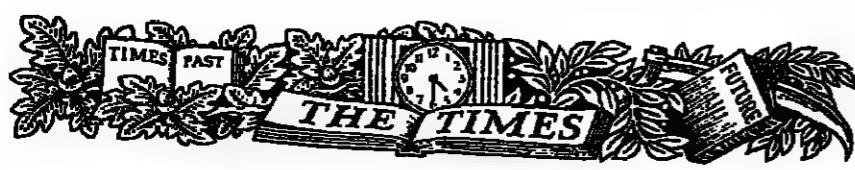
it is not all her own work but something of a cobbled-together effort. "We've created the Piltdown bimbo."

• *Advance notice reaches me of a fringe meeting to be held at this year's Tory party conference in Bournemouth. A buffet lunch will be served as delegates listen to an address entitled "Obesity: a plague for the 21st century — fat or fiction". The speaker is a Professor Michael Leon.*

P.H.S.

DIARY





HOTSPUR'S HOUR

Portillo vs Clarke in the £4 billion defence stakes

The relief written all over Michael Portillo's face yesterday gave the lie to the pretence on all sides that in the battle preceding the award of £4 billion worth of defence contracts, he and Kenneth Clarke had spent the past few weeks merely firming up minor details. The core of the dispute was over the Treasury's determination to exact further cuts in defence as part of its search for across-the-board spending cuts this year.

The Chancellor would not have fought so strenuously to defer the announcement until the autumn had he not hoped that by folding consideration of them into the inter-departmental bargaining of the present public spending round, some orders could be put on indefinite hold and the costs of others heavily pruned.

Both militarily and politically, the Defence Secretary was on solid ground. When deep cuts were imposed on the defence budget two years ago under the Front Line First review, the Government promised the forces a period of stability and pledged that spin return for efficiency savings, they would be vastly better equipped. Behind him were ranged the big guns of the British defence industry, together with numerous Tory MPs anxious about factories in their constituencies whose future depended on the decision. The Defence Select Committee, already indignant that last year's defence budget was reduced by more than £600 million after it had been approved, has made the unprecedented threat of refusing to recommend the 1996 White Paper to the House unless ministers rule out further defence cuts.

Yet when the Cabinet postponed its approval of the contracts last Tuesday, the Treasury had all but won. John Major's initial reaction was to tell the two men to sort it out between them — a decision that would have virtually guaranteed postponement. Given the personal and political rivalries between the two ministers, Mr Clarke's sleep will have been little troubled by the

thought that cuts would seriously weaken Mr Portillo's position at Defence, in the Cabinet and in the party.

That would certainly have been the case. Mr Portillo has had some trouble winning the trust of the Services and their stalwart supporters on the Conservative back benches. He has only just emerged from a bruising battle over the privatisation of married quarters. He could ill afford to be publicly forced to retreat. His reputation as a heavy political hitter was on the line.

The decision to go ahead with all three orders not only snatches victory for Mr Portillo from the jaws of defeat; it brings relief to the forces, the defence industry and thousands of defence industry workers. The Government's estimate that 5,000 jobs will be created understates the employment impact. British Aerospace estimates that directly and indirectly, the £2 billion contract to replace the ageing Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft will create or sustain 10,000 jobs. These contracts are also critical to the success of Britain's drive to restore the competitiveness of the European defence industry by greater integration — a strategy which Mr Portillo has vigorously promoted. The award of a new RAF long-range missile to BAe-Matra means that French assent to a merger of the two companies' missile businesses is now assured — and with it, the way is cleared for their joint bid for the huge French state consortium, Thomson-CSF, soon to be privatised.

Mr Portillo was saved, however, only by the 11th-hour intervention of Michael Heseltine — who in most Cabinet line-ups is not the *deus ex machina* to whom the Defence Secretary would instinctively turn. The determining factor, as it always is with the Deputy Prime Minister, was the political arithmetic of jobs and votes. It is for the other, strategic reasons advanced by Mr Portillo that the Treasury deserved its defeat. But for the Defence Secretary, this crucial victory must be sweet at any price.

NETANYAHU'S OFFER

An Israeli initiative on Lebanon that deserves to prosper

The Middle East is alive with diplomatic activity. After David Levy and Yassir Arafat met on Tuesday, the leader of the Palestine National Authority (PNA) travelled to Damascus for talks with President Assad. Given the minimal contact between Syria and the PLO since 1983, when Mr Assad expelled Mr Arafat and encouraged factional revolt against him, their meeting is striking as the establishment of relations with Likud. Meanwhile, Mr Levy repeated his readiness for direct dialogue with the Syrians. As we report today, Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, has opened a new initiative on the Lebanon.

Perceptions of the new Israeli Government are changing fast. Having been castigated as an implacable opponent of peace, Mr Netanyahu is now being cast in some quarters as barely distinguishable from his predecessor, Shimon Peres. The Prime Minister is entitled to bemusement at these events. As his interview with *The Times* published today makes clear, he believes that he has been consistent. His stand on substantive issues, he credibly claims, is little different to what it was eight weeks ago when elected. If anything, Mr Netanyahu is perhaps concerned that all this reassessment has gone too far. While there are broad areas of agreement between Likud and Labour — on relations with Jordan and the need to work with the PNA — there is also a significant difference.

Mr Netanyahu does not believe in the principle of land-for-peace where Syria is concerned — not while that nation is in the grip of the Assad dictatorship. He does not favour trading the known security of the Golan Heights for the dubious promise of peaceful coexistence. Israel will engage in discussions with Damascus, certainly, but

on the basis of peace-for-peace. Since it is unlikely that Mr Assad will do business on any terms short of total and unconditional control of the Golan, an impasse is likely.

In essence, Mr Netanyahu disputes Mr Assad's contention that no Middle East peace is possible without Syrian blessing. This line has been taken by successive US secretaries of state. It is doubtful whether shuttle diplomacy either by Mr Arafat or the Americans will alter his position. The danger for Israel lies not in what Syria might do directly but by the trouble that can create through its proxies in the Lebanon. The country is an effective protectorate of Damascus, with 35,000 Syrian troops on its soil. Hezbollah exists, and acts, largely on Mr Assad's say-so. Its resumed attacks on Israeli citizens earlier this year triggered a chain of events that nearly derailed the entire peace process. The distinctly patchy deal that was then supervised by Warren Christopher may not last. If Israel makes advances in talks with other parties, Syria may allow, indeed encourage, Hezbollah to resume rocket attacks in the belief that Israel will be forced to choose between a process that meets Mr Assad's demands or the risk of no peace at all.

Mr Netanyahu is seeking to pre-empt such blackmail with his "Lebanon First" offer, the withdrawal of Israel's occupying troops from southern Lebanon in return for the total disarmament of Hezbollah. It is a bold challenge — to Lebanon and its Western friends as well as Damascus. Every patch of ground gained for peace in the Middle East is precious. Mr Assad should be left in no doubt that this is an offer that Syria cannot sabotage without seriously compromising his claims to be serious about an overall settlement in the Middle East.

SHORT SHIFT

Opposition spokespersons have to be team players

Like an adolescent staying out ever later at night, Clare Short has been testing the limits of Tony Blair's tolerance. Yesterday she found them. Having achieved the results he wanted in the Shadow Cabinet elections, the Labour leader decided to teach his colleagues a few lessons. Most in need of them was the Shadow Transport Secretary.

With precision timing, Ms Short had stormed out of a television interview the previous day because she was asked a question about the London Underground strike. Ostensibly she was angry because she had been led to believe that the discussion would be about a different railway line. But for the Opposition transport spokeswoman to refuse to answer transport questions on a southeast regional programme the day before a Tube strike beggars belief.

Ms Short is an engaging politician. Her personality is huge, her exuberance infectious. Politicians on both sides of the House like her and so do voters. They appreciate her honesty and enjoy listening to her say the unsayable. But parties are not simply collections of individuals. There is such a thing as collective responsibility, which has to be adhered to if Government and Opposition are to function tolerably well. Ms Short has breached this principle too many times for her to claim that it was

accidental. If Labour is to have a chance of winning the next election, it must be united. This applies particularly to the front bench.

Her disagreement over the Tube strike was much more serious than those on cannabis or tax. Mr Blair and several of his colleagues had quite clearly said that the dispute should go to arbitration. This position had already been agreed in Shadow Cabinet. If new Labour is to stand for anything, it is for putting the interests of the consumer above those of the producer: in this case, backing the passengers not the striking drivers. Ms Short was not just visibly uncomfortable with this position. She could not even bring herself to support it on television. That will not do. If she cannot go along with a party line in Opposition, what will she be like in Government?

Ms Short is clearly furious with the way in which she has been demoted. She argues that because she came third in the Shadow Cabinet poll she deserves a senior job. But those elections, as ever, were rigged. Ms Short adds to the gaiety of British politics. If she could turn her energy to good purpose and learn some self-discipline, she could be a highly effective politician. In the meantime, she will have to content herself with Overseas Development. And there she should be safe: at least in that industry there are no trade unions.

Stone of Scone

From Mr Peter G. Vasey

Sir, Mr Cowe's suggestion (letter, July 24) that the Stone of Destiny be deposited in Berwick-upon-Tweed is an excellent one — provided that Berwick, too, could be restored to Scotland, as it too was appropriated by Edward I in 1296.

Yours faithfully,
PETER G. VASEY,
78 West Holmes Gardens,
Musselburgh, Lothian.
July 24.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Scrapie and BSE link with humans?

From Dr Helen Grant

Sir, The transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs), including BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy), CJD (Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease) and kuru, are caused by a uniquely mysterious infective microorganism, the "scrapie agent", which is poorly understood by scientists, let alone the general public.

This widespread ignorance has frequently produced misleading public pronouncements, a very common example of which is the statement, made by a member of the committee advising the Government on BSE, Professor Jeff Almond (report, July 23, later editions): "We know that scrapie, which has been around for centuries, poses no risk to humans." We know no such thing. What we know is that scrapie has never been shown to pose a risk to humans, a very different matter.

Before 1986, when our cattle were first infected with the ovine TSE called scrapie, and so developed bovine TSE, scrapie was the only reservoir of the "slow virus" from which humans could conceivably have been infected to develop CJD, the human TSE. The fact that we still lack proof of this route of infection does not exclude its possibility.

In the UK it has always been traditional for abattoir workers routinely to leave the brains of sheep inside the skulls so that sheep's brains (unlike cattle brains before 1989) never went into our "meat products" but, remaining inside the skulls, infected our cattle with "BSE" instead. Not so with sheep spinal cords, however, which is why I stated in my evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Agriculture in June 1990 that those who always eat the spinal cord fragment out of the lamb chop (and who are genetically susceptible) will develop CJD after the usual long incubation period.

The sheep offal ban proposed by the Farm Commissioner, Franz Fischer (report, July 24), will result in these fragments of spinal cord, like the brains, being absent from our dinner plates and is entirely to be welcomed.

Yours faithfully,
H. C. GRANT,
10 Antrim Grove, NW3.
July 24.

From Mr Aidan Harrison

Sir, It would be virtually impossible to find any British sheep amongst the millions now being sold for fresh meat which have consumed anything other than their mother's milk and grass.

The "theoretical risk" of BSE in sheep which are fed banned unnatural substances in a laboratory is no more relevant than the potential ill effect on the health of scientists and politicians if they were forced to eat grass.

Yours faithfully,
AIDAN HARRISON,
Morehills, Netherwitton,
Morpeth, Northumberland.

Labour democracy

From Mr Mike Thomas

Sir, Gerald Kaufman's memory is at fault ("Labour's comedy of shadows", July 25). The arrangement whereby members of the Shadow Cabinet are entitled to Cabinet places in the event of a Labour victory was not one of the democratic reforms imposed in the 1980s by the hard Left.

It was the recommendation of a broadly based working party of the Parliamentary Labour Party (of which I was myself a member) in which the Centre and Right had a majority.

It was born of a widespread revolution in the PLP against the cronyism of Harold Wilson and his "kitchen Cabinet" in the 1960s and 1970s.

The Centre of the party allied with the Left at this period to reject the proposals which I and others in the PLP (many of whom subsequently left Labour to found the SDP) had made to select MPs and elect the leader by one member one vote.

The former process now is hailed as the democratic foundation of "new Labour"; the latter is being stumbled towards as the party still struggles to extract itself from the undemocratic nonsense of the electoral college.

The Left did Labour enormous damage during this period but the stubborn resistance to change of the Labour establishment was one of their greatest allies.

Yours faithfully,
MIKE THOMAS
(MP for Newcastle upon
Tyne East; Labour, 1974-81;
SDP, 1981-83;
Milton Lodge,
Iver, Buckinghamshire.
July 25.

Time to remedy the law's delays

From the Editor of The Western Mail

Sir, Lord Woolf, the Master of the Rolls, is on the point of producing his report on the whole structure and procedure of the civil courts. Such a review will not be before time.

The Western Mail, along with three other newspapers, was recently involved in an interlocutory hearing in the Court of Appeal, in which a litigant in person was appealing against a striking-out order from a lower court. The case was listed to last a day.

But the proceedings which followed — with the judges involved appearing to have little concern for the time and cost of the hearing — horrified me.

The appeal lasted into a second day which I consider should not have been necessary, and seriously increased the costs.

The case could, in my view, have been kept to one day if the court was set up to work a full business day and keep a focus on its *raison d'être*. But there were lengthy interruptions during the course of the day, and by 4.30pm, when the court rose, we were nowhere near finishing. There was no suggestion that we stay until the early

evening to finalise matters, as would have happened in almost every other aspect of life; the nearest to it was the announcement that we would start early the following day — at 10am! The case eventually finished at 3.15pm on the second day and judgment was reserved.

Surely the courts need to have a much better regard for those involved in cases and the costs they are incurring. They need to be run in as efficient a way as possible — and not in a way that, in my opinion, recalls some of the worst inefficiencies and excesses of British industry in the 1950s and 1960s.

This is said not out of disrespect for the law and the judges involved — of course justice is paramount, and of course efficiency, ultimately, must be seen to be done — but in recognition of the commercial reality of the situation.

Yours faithfully,
NEIL FOWLER, Editor,
The Western Mail,
Thomson House,
Havelock Street, Cardiff.
July 24.

Court rules on naming defendants

From Mr D. J. Cassell

Sir, Editors of all sections of the media are giving encouragement, inadvertently, to those who would seek to ban the naming of defendants in criminal cases.

I refer to the fact that hardly a day passes when one does not read or hear that, for legal reasons, those under the age of 18 involved as defendants in proceedings in magistrates' or crown courts "cannot be named for legal reasons".

Unlike those under 18 appearing before youth courts, juveniles and young persons appearing before an adult court can be named unless the magistrate(s) or judge makes a Section 39 order under the Children & Young Persons Act 1993 imposing a ban on identification of a person under 18.

The sheep offal ban proposed by the Farm Commissioner, Franz Fischer (report, July 24), will result in these

under 18 which lead to a feeling of disquiet among the public, offenders are not named in reports, although no indication is given as to the reason for this.

It is therefore seems a cruel celebration of the millennium to build a £65 million theme park there (report, July 20) under the aegis of English Heritage.

Each year police are used to keep "travellers" away, but now 1.8 million visitors are to be welcomed.

Sincerely,

MARY HILLIER,
30 Clarence Road,
Meadvile, Redhill, Surrey.

July 20.

An outsider in the saint stakes

From Mr David Gould

Sir, Mr and Mrs Cooper's well-intentioned letter about William Morris (July 23) would have drawn some pungent remarks from him. After leaving Oxford in 1856 Morris abandoned any thoughts of a career in the Church, and in middle life his political allegiance was towards communism. He became a professed agnostic.

Morris had immense energy and, after reading Marx, he threw himself wholeheartedly for some ten years into the communist cause, speaking at meetings all over the country. This amazed his friends, and many of them played down the matter after his death as a "deplorable aberration". Nevertheless, his political work was as important a part of his life as his decorative work and his poetry.

As for Morris's "exemplary life", he was short-tempered, stamping and shouting, on one occasion throwing one of his incompetent workmen into a vat of green dye. And his wife had the table legs screwed to the floor to prevent him from restlessly overturning it during his heated rages. Bernard Shaw, as usual, must have had his tongue in his cheek when he suggested calling Morris a saint.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID GOULD,
Highcroft,
South Woodchester, Gloucestershire.
July 24.

Plans for Stonehenge

From Mrs Jack Hillier

Sir, In the past, on a long drive west, we would stop near Stonehenge for a picnic breakfast and marvel at its solitary mystery.

It therefore seems a cruel celebration of the millennium to build a £65 million theme park there (report, July 20) under the aegis of English Heritage.

Each year police are used to keep "travellers" away, but now 1.8 million visitors are to be welcomed.

Sincerely,

MARY HILLIER,
30 Clarence Road,
Meadvile, Redhill, Surrey.

July 20.

The sound and the fury

From Mr Kelvin Nel

Sir, As a cinema manager I wholeheartedly agree with Geoff Brown (article, Arts, July 23) that some film soundtracks can combine a high decibel level with a low standard of clarity and audibility. But I dispute his assertion that "in Britain we are more likely to follow the bad habit of suffering in silence".

It is a myth that the British public don't complain. However cinemas, as exhibitors, are the middle men.

The director and/or distributor order us to play their films at particular sound levels, which often deafen our audiences. We get the



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
July 25: Mr Peter Harley was received by The Queen upon relinquishing his appointment as Sergeant-at-Arms and Secretary, Lord Chamberlain's Office.

His Excellency Mr Benjamin Masilo was received in audience by Her Majesty to present the Letters of Recall of his predecessor and his own Letters of Commission as High Commissioner for the Kingdom of Lesotho in London.

Mrs Masilo was also received by The Queen.

Sir John Coles (Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs) was present.

Sir Peter Groom (former Permanent Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry) was received by Her Majesty.

Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said

Sultanate of Oman visited The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh and remained to luncheon.

The Prince of Wales was present.

The following were invited: His Excellency Mr Hussain Ali Abdullatif (Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman), Brigadier Timothy Landon (Personal Adviser to The Sultan of Oman), Sir John Coles, Mr Richard Muir and Major-General Patrick Cordingley.

The Rt Hon Gregory Knight MP was received by Her Majesty and delivered up his Wand of Office upon relinquishing his appointment as Treasurer of the Household.

Mr Andrew MacKay MP was received by The Queen upon relinquishing his appointment as Vice-Chamberlain of the Household and received from Her Majesty his Wand of Office upon relinquishing his appointment as Vice-Chamberlain of the Household.

Mr Derek Conway MP was received by The Queen upon his appointment as Vice-Chamberlain of the Household and received from Her Majesty his Wand of Office.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh gave an afternoon

Party in the Garden of Buckingham Palace.

The Prince of Wales was present.

Her Majesty's Body Guard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen-Arms and The Queen's Body Guard of the Yeoman of the Guard.

The Band of The Life Guards

and The Royal Logistic Corps

played selections of music during the afternoon.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Honorary Life Member and Past President of Marylebone Cricket Club,

this morning attended the Test Match between England and Pakistan at Lord's Ground, London NW1.

His Royal Highness, President, World Wide Fund for Nature - WWF International, this evening gave a dinner at Buckingham Palace.

By Command of The Queen, Vice-Admiral Sir James Weatherall (Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps) called upon His Excellency U Hla Maung at 19A Charles Street, London, this morning in order to bid farewell to His Excellency upon relinquishing his appointment as Ambassador from the Union of Myanmar (Burma) to the Court of St James's.

ST JAMES'S PALACE

July 25: The Prince of Wales, Honorary Air Commodore, Royal Air Force Valley, this morning received Group Captain David Ray upon relinquishing his appointment as Officer Commanding and Group Captain Martin Jones upon assuming the appointment.

His Royal Highness, Honorary Air Commodore, Royal Air Force Valley, afterwards received Flight Lieutenant Egyri Hyakinson and Lieutenant with The Prince of Wales Trophy, which is awarded annually for tactical navigation and weaponry.

The following were invited: His Excellency Mr Hussain Ali Abdullatif (Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman), Brigadier Timothy Landon (Personal Adviser to The Sultan of Oman), Sir John Coles, Mr Richard Muir and Major-General Patrick Cordingley.

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The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh gave an afternoon

The Queen has been graciously pleased to appoint Mr Andrew MacKay MP as Treasurer of Her Majesty's Household and Mr Derek Conway MP as Vice-Chamberlain of Her Majesty's Household.

Dinner

Fruiterers' Company

The Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, will open the new business school at Buckingham University at 11.10.

Reception

Lord Mayor of Westminster The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Westminster were the hosts at a Summer reception held yesterday at Westminster Council House.

Lord Mayor of Westminster

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Westminster were the hosts at a Summer reception held yesterday at Westminster Council House.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: John Field, composer, Dublin, 1782; Winthrop Mackworth Praed, poet and politician, London, 1802; Alfred Marshall, economist, London, 1842; George Bernard Shaw, dramatist, Dublin, 1856; Serge Koussevitsky, conductor, Tver, Russia, 1874; Karl Gustav Jung, psychologist, Kassel, Germany, 1875; Andre Maurois, novelist and biographer, Paris, France, 1888; Aldous Huxley, novelist, Godalming, Surrey, 1894; Robert Graves, poet and novelist, London, 1895; Paul Gallico, novelist, New York, 1897; Salvador Allende, President of Chile 1970-73; Valparaiso, 1908.

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NEWS

Short demoted by ruthless Blair

■ Tony Blair ousted Clare Short from her post as Shadow Transport Secretary in a ruthless reshuffle of his top team. Ignoring Ms Short's strong showing in the Shadow Cabinet elections, and despite her efforts to secure a better job, he demoted her to a low-key post in charge of overseas development and replaced her with Andrew Smith, who did not even stand for the elections Page 1

Portillo victory over £4bn RAF order

■ A £4 billion defence order that will safeguard thousands of jobs was announced after Michael Heseltine was called in to resolve a Cabinet battle between the Chancellor and the Defence Secretary. Michael Portillo said the three RAF contracts, all with British companies, would help to sustain about 5,000 jobs Page 1

Massacre fears

There were fears that the central African republic of Burundi was about to be engulfed in massacres after the army took power in a coup, bringing new fears of Hutu-Tutsi violence Page 1, 14

Atlanta steel

Atlantaans are angry and bewildered about the way their city has been lambasted for organisational shortcomings during the opening week of the centennial Olympic Games Page 1

Call to Thatcher

Baroness Thatcher has been asked to play a substantial role in the next general election campaign to try to boost the Tories' faltering chances Page 2

Jailed for life

Anne Trigwell, 43, began a life sentence after being found guilty of hiring hitmen to kill her private detective husband, bludgeoned to death Page 3

Airline fined

British Midland Airways was fined £100,000 plus £25,000 costs for "an act of gross negligence" which, but for a pilot's skill, could have led to the crash of a Boeing 737 jet Page 5

Operation rhino

Equipment included a heavy-duty crane and an artificial stainless steel toenail when Maggot, a 28-year-old white rhinoceros, needed a pedicure Page 7

The Suez crisis revisited, 40 years on

■ Forty years ago today Gamal Abdel Nasser announced the Suez Canal Company's nationalisation, provoking a crisis that destroyed Britain's Prime Minister and divided its people. It also ended hopes of peaceful co-existence between Israel and its Arab neighbours; set in train the Empire's dismemberment; and brought the world close to nuclear war Page 6



Imran Khan leaving the High Court in London yesterday with his wife, Jemima, right, and her mother, Lady Goldsmith. Page 5

BUSINESS

Job: ICI is cutting 2,700 jobs in a £137 million worldwide restructuring and Philips Electronics, 6,000, mainly in Europe Page 23, 24

British Gas: British Gas launched an unprecedented tax challenge on the Government, demanding the repayment of £1 billion plus in interest Page 23

Mortgages: Nationwide Building Society knocked 0.25 per cent off its standard home loan rate to 6.49 per cent, the lowest for 31 years Page 23

Markets: The FT-SE 100 Index rose 15.9 points to close at 3,684.7. Sterling's trade-weighted index fell from 85.0 to 84.9 after a rise from \$1.5541 to \$1.5580, but a fall from DM2.3120 to DM2.3027 Page 26

SPORT

Cricket: Pakistan, rescued by Inzamam-ul-Haq's superb 148 on the opening day of the first Test against England at Lord's, were 290 for 9 at the close Page 44

Olympic Games: Three British crews, led by the defending coxless pairs champions Steve Redgrave and Matthew Pinsent, reached the rowing finals Page 41

Rugby: Martin Offiah is on the verge of a transfer from Wigan to London Broncos. He is also set to play rugby union for a club in the South Page 36

Motor racing: Damon Hill, preparing for the German Grand Prix, brushed aside speculation that his team, Williams, had signed Heinz-Harald Frentzen to replace him Page 36

Races: National Potters are among the best in the world, and both galleries and dealers are finally waking up to the fact Page 32

ARTS

Troilus staged: Benedict Nightingale reviews the bold new RSC production of "Shakespeare's most cynically modern play", *Troilus and Cressida* Page 30

Pop on Friday: Alan Jackson on Sinead Lohan, the new voice of Irish folk music; David Sinclair on the Sex Pistols' album, Caitlin Moran on the morality of "outing" gay rock stars Page 31

Box revived: More than 80 years after its composition, Arnold Bax's sensuous orchestral piece *Spring Fire*, has finally received its Proms premiere Page 30

Feats of clay: Britain's potters are among the best in the world, and both galleries and dealers are finally waking up to the fact Page 32

TOMORROW**IN THE TIMES**

■ GOING WILD
Fashion safari: the coolest clothes for hot climates, in the Magazine

■ PLUS ...
Vision, the seven-day guide to the best of terrestrial and satellite television, and radio

FEATURES

On the border: How could "God's chosen people" have made such enemies of the Arabs? Page 16

Brutal treatment: Thirty years ago doctors believed homosexuality could be cured by encouraging such behaviour and then making the person vomit Page 16

Valerie Grove interviews David Heathcoat-Amory, the Paymaster General who resigned this week and is more famous out of office than he was in it..... Page 17

Foot first: Giles Coren asks why it is fashionable to wear sandals when feet are revolting? Page 17

EDUCATION

Reaching rock bottom: A study of standards in maths shows that England has slipped to the bottom of the league compared with nine similar countries. It is no longer a question of is there a problem, but of how can it be tackled? Page 35

Insiders pushed out: Business schools are turning out people trained only in finance, who then go on to manage businesses they know nothing about Page 35

■ IN THE PAPERS

The EU and Japan have good reason to protest. Neither a free trade zone nor a multilateral world order can withstand a country like the United States when it decides to put pressure on those it thinks support terrorism Page 18

—Frankfurter Rundschau

PETER RIDDELL

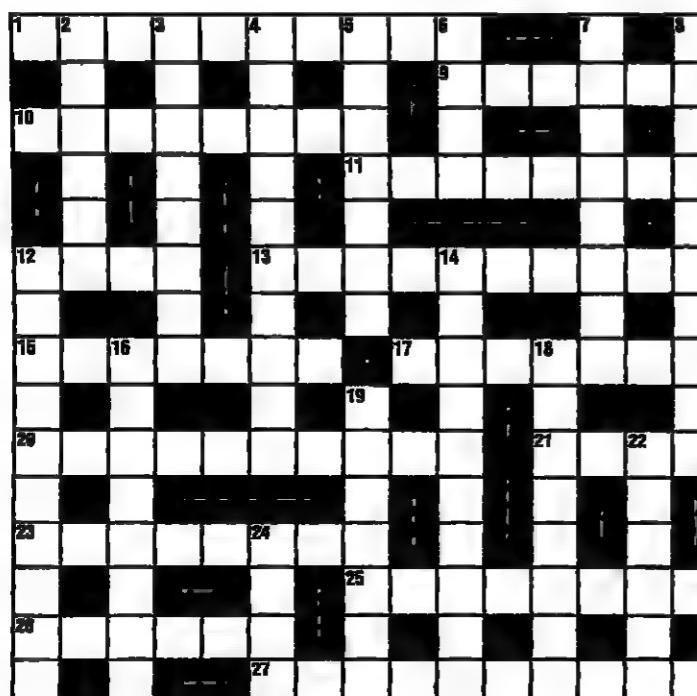
What the Government has done, as so often in the past, is to announce big job saving defence orders and contracts before an election, leaving until later questions of how they will be financed Page 9

OBITUARIES

Sir David Nicolson, company chairman and former MEP; Hans Fellner, Christie's fine books seller; Joyce Buck, interior designer Page 27

LETTERS

BSE: naming defendants; women lawyers; William Morris; Stonehenge Page 19

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,230**TIMES WEATHERCAST**

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Dorset, Hants & IOW, 703
Devon & Cornwall, 704
Wts, Gloucs, Avon, Som., 705
Beds, Herts & Essex, 706
Norfolk, Suffolk, Camb., 708
West & S. Mercia & Gwent, 709
Shropshire, Powys & Welsh, 710
Central Midlands, 711
East Midlands, 712
Lincs & Humberside, 713
Derbyshire & Cheshire, 714
NW England, 715
W. & Yorks & Derby, 716
Humber & Tees, 717
Cumbria & Lake District, 718
SW Scotland, 719
W. Central Scotland & Borders, 720
E. Central Scotland, 721
Galloway & E. Highlands, 724
N.W. Scotland, 725
Orkney & Shetland, 726
N Ireland, 727

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THE TIMES 2

INSIDE SECTION

2
TODAY**BUSINESS**

British Gas raises the pressure on the Government
PAGE 27

**ARTS**

Live and lacerating: the Sex Pistols' great new album
PAGES 30-32

**SPORT**

Fortunes swing on testing first day at Lord's
PAGES 36-44

**TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
PAGES
42-43**

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY JULY 26 1996

British Gas threat to DTI in £1bn writ

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

BRITISH GAS yesterday launched an unprecedented tax challenge, demanding that the Government repay £1 billion plus interest.

In a writ to the Department of Trade and Industry, the company claimed it had overpaid tax due under the Gas Levy by £1 billion over the past ten years. The DTI responded with a raft of counter writs to gas producers. If British Gas proves its legal case, the Government will expect 27 gas producers to share the £1 billion burden.

The gas producers include Shell, BP, Esso and Elf. Many of those affected have been holding talks with British Gas about its expensive take-or-pay contracts under which it is obliged to buy gas at prices far higher than those at which it can sell the fuel.

British Gas is arguing that it has paid too much tax on 24 of its longest-held contracts which are in eight of the oldest gas fields. It is claiming overpayment for a ten-year period.

The DTI said it did not believe British Gas's interpretation of

the law was correct but if the company was proved right "the Government would have to levy claims against producers of the gas in question".

The move by British Gas throws the spotlight on the controversial contracts it struck in first generation gas fields, as a result of which it could now face a deficit of £4 billion. All eight UK continental shelf fields on which the dispute centres are old fields for which British Gas entered into contracts covering the entire life of the fields. By arguing against its liability for the levy, it is expected to claim that contracts have developed in such a fashion that they are no longer subject to the levy.

The crux of the argument could be that the company no longer has expectations to use the gas and therefore should not pay the levy. It could claim that the fields have been exploited in a way that exceeds its needs or wishes. British Gas is refusing to elaborate on how it will pursue its case.

The companies that may face counterclaims from the

DTI are reluctant to comment before definite action.

The Gas Levy was introduced in 1981 to tax output from old gas fields which had escaped the Petroleum Revenue Tax in 1975. The charge, currently 4p a therm, is levied on gas purchasers and on the field. The levy amount has previously been a bone of contention for British Gas and it has previously joined the Gas Consumers Council in arguing for a reduction in the charge.

British Gas, which has paid £5.6 billion under the levy, is now disputing its liability on about a third of its contracts that are subject to it. The levy is generally paid by gas purchasers rather than producers, with the majority of gas purchasing conducted by British Gas. However, in some instances it is paid by producers who have a contract agreement with British Gas for a field but are selling on excess fuel to other buyers.

British Gas said it had taken action now because legal demands dictated it had to make a move by the sixth anniversary of the Finance Act, which modified the levy. That day is today.

British Gas and the DTI are now expected to hold talks before the company decides whether to move to the next stage and serve the writ.

Although the DTI said there was no immediate schedule for talks, British Gas was optimistic that the dispute may not reach court.

After issuing the writ, British Gas has four months in which to move on its action or abandon it. By the time it decides on its next step, British Gas will also know whether Ofgas has given any ground in its pricing review on TransCo or whether the issue will end up at the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

British Gas yesterday sealed a ten-year deal to sell gas through the continental interconnector to Germany. The agreement to sell about 20 billion cubic metres of gas to Winges is the biggest UK export deal so far struck for the interconnector, which is due to begin operating in 1998.

The UK economy continues to grow and consumer confidence appears to be increasing in the USA and UK. Japan is recovering. We believe there is a chance of modest growth in all major markets in 1997."

Only 15 per cent of the job cuts announced yesterday will fall in Britain.

City chemicals analysts downgraded their estimates for current-year profits to between £700 and £750 million from £800 to £850 million. ICI says: "We continue to believe that the present difficulties in the market place represent a pause rather than a downturn in the economic cycle."

"The UK economy continues to grow and consumer confidence appears to be increasing in the USA and UK. Japan is recovering. We believe there is a chance of modest growth in all major markets in 1997."

Charles Miller Smith, chief executive, said that ICI is also reviewing its bulk chemical operations. He said ICI would "stay with bulk chemicals, where we feel we can make money over the cycle" but said "there will come a moment when we look to exit from certain businesses".

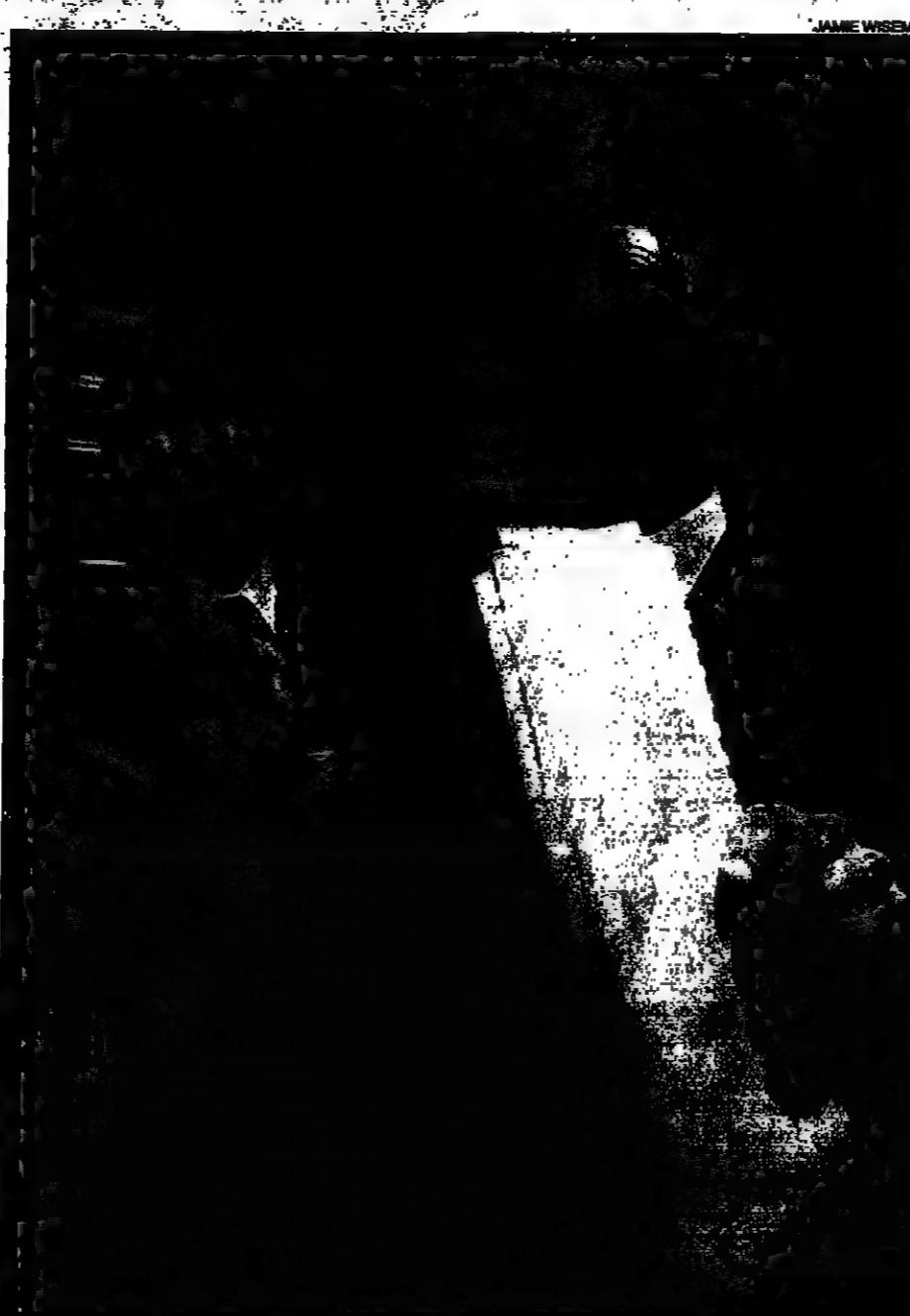
He emphasised, however, that now "does not seem the right time, given the current weakness across bulk chemicals".

Mr Miller Smith said destocking had affected much of the ICI business but that it had "generally run its course" except in titanium and polyesters.

ICI is to spend around £65 million on restructuring North American explosives, £44 million on cuts in paints and £28 million on acrylics.

Pennington, page 27

Part-time post pays £120,000



No smoke without fire: Brandon Gough, right, chairman of Yorkshire Water, fends off shareholder criticism during a break in the meeting after a fire alarm sounded

Yorkshire Water chairman survives call to resign

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

YORKSHIRE WATER'S new part-time chairman kept his £120,000-a-year job yesterday after an attempt by some shareholders to remove him.

Brandon Gough's commitment to spend one day a week in Yorkshire overseeing the affairs of the much criticised utility was not good enough, according to many at the annual meeting in Harrogate.

A shareholder revolt against his appointment was championed by Pirc, the corporate governance consultancy that advises institutional investors.

ers, and, looking at this board, that is all we have."

Mr Gough said: "I'm in Yorkshire one day a week and I'm in touch with my colleagues almost every day. These days that is how companies are run."

"I was offered £120,000 and I was very happy to accept it. It is a very substantial amount of money, but that is the deal."

Mr Gough was reappointed by a substantial majority, on a show of hands.

Pennington, page 25

Somerfield likely to cut float price again

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY



SOMERFIELD, the supermarket company, is likely today to cut its flotation price for the second time — to about 145p a share — in a final attempt to ensure that its debut on the stock market remains on course for next week.

The company has been forced to act to overcome strong institutional resistance to the 160p a share pricing it had declared only last week.

It is believed that institutional shareholders have now subscribed in sufficient numbers to ensure the flotation can still proceed.

Another reduction in price would value Somerfield at £435 million,

almost a quarter less than the £570 million maximum valuation placed on the company in its offer document.

The float has been dogged by difficult market conditions as well as concern that Somerfield may struggle in an already crowded supermarket sector. A profit warning last week from Iceland Foods, a rival, also caused nervousness among potential buyers.

The float was originally priced at between 180p and 190p, but Somerfield was forced to drop the offer price to 160p last week.

The institutions have been able to apply pressure because of the need for Somerfield's bankers to recoup some of

their loans. Somerfield was taken private seven years ago in a £2.1 billion buyout by Isocelis. The float was intended to fund the repayment of about £400 million to Somerfield's bankers and up to £300 million of Isocelis debt. Isocelis is likely to receive only a token payment after the latest drop in price.

The revised price is also likely to cost David Simons, the company's chief executive, more than £1 million.

Mr Simons was heavily criticised in the City for a flotation bonus deal worth up to £1.6 million, but now is likely to have to settle for a figure closer to £4 million.

Pennington, page 25

BUSINESS TODAY

FTSE 100
FTSE All share
Nikkei
New York
Dow Jones
S&P Composite

Federal Funds
Long Bond
Yield

5-Year Interest
UK long gilt future (Sep)

New York
London
DM
JPY
CHF
SGD
Yen
Z Index

London
DM
JPY
CHF
SGD
Yen
Z Index

London
DM
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Z Index

Tokyo close Yen 108.00

Brent 15-day (Oct) \$18.85 (\$18.65)

London close... \$885.00 (\$884.45)

* denotes midday trading price

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London close...

Market disenchantment with ICI grows Somerfield priced to go High Court rules on Leeds takeover

LAZY journalists have always referred to ICI as the bellwether of the British economy. Few ever knew where the metaphor came from — the bellwether is the leader of a flock of sheep, onto whom a bell is hung to indicate which way the flock is heading. Fewer still could spell it. But ICI hung up its bell several years ago and has since travelled a long way from the rest of the flock.

That journey began with the split three years ago into a pure chemicals business and Zeneca, the pharmaceuticals side. Commodities businesses such as pure chemicals ride up and down with world trade tides and more often than not find themselves washed up on the shore.

If the world economy is booming, there is a shortage of bulk commodities and prices rocket. By the time new factories are on stream, demand has peaked. The only way to cope with collapsing prices is to cut jobs and make factories more efficient, while closing the most outdated ones. This takes capacity out of the market just in time for the next upturn, and production cannot cope. So prices rocket...

ICI has tried to fight its way out of this trap, concentrating on growing Asian economies and building plastics plants in Pakistan, Taiwan and, possibly, China. There have been grand promises made about the poten-

tial of these markets — or at least until prices collapsed. The reasons, predictably, include a glut of polyester fibre as other new plants come on stream.

Yesterday's job losses are an acceleration of a scheme, named in grand corporate-speak Value Gap and announced in February, to cope with these more difficult conditions. ICI's saving grace, short-term, is the dividend, the shares yielding 5.3 per cent for this year. Longer-term there is the chance, raised again yesterday, that the group will lessen its dependence on commodities by selling some of the bulk chemicals businesses, staying with paints and specialty materials which are less dependent on the chemicals cycle. But this, in terms of unlocking hidden value, would be a long way from a Demerger 2, and there is the little problem of finding a buyer at this stage in that cycle.

ICI's half-way figures were always going to be awful, but the market is now thoroughly disenchanted with the shares. In April it seemed as if they might break the £10 tape; they closed

last night at 763p, with analysts putting a floor of 750p on the price only because of the dividend yield.

Also mitigating against disposals is the fact that ICI does not need the cash — indeed, the group could raise up to £2.5 billion of fresh capital if it could find anything to spend the money on. At times like these, analysts' minds turn to share buy-backs. A distant prospect, but ICI would be following a path already well trodden by Britain plc. No longer the bellwether, more of a stray sheep lagging well behind the rest of the flock.

City drives a hard bargain

AS students and other deserving poor have long known, there are some excellent bargains to be found among the perishables at the big supermarkets if one is prepared to wait until just before closing time. Somerfield shares, some analysts have suggested, are the ultimate perishable, because the chain's future as an



as an independent entity looks short. As the clock ticked away towards the end of the offer period and the City remained sniffy, the reduced price tags duly appeared.

The shares, going for 180p to 190p initially, ended at a bargain-basement price of 145p. This represents a forward earnings multiple of 6.5, about half that enjoyed by J Sainsbury, and a generous prospective yield of 9 per cent. With hindsight, it is not clear what else the board and its advisers could have done. They were the ultimate forced sellers. The City was not taken by prospects for a business that competed with rivals such as Sainsbury and Tesco. But Somerfield needed to float if the

banks were to get their money out. That need was reinforced by the huge rewards to directors of a successful stock market entry.

The first price tag of £540 to £570 million would have been used to repay Somerfield's debt, with some over to pay off a fraction of the far heavier borrowings of Isoscelis, the vehicle for an earlier buyout and current owner of Somerfield. The price was cut once and that slim repayment to Isoscelis was slimmed even further. Last night's final reduction probably wipes it out entirely, except what extra debt Somerfield can take on after flotation.

The alternative, staying private, did not offer much chance of paying off anyone's debt. The chain is not valuable enough to be broken up and sold to various retailers, because many of the individual shops would not have found buyers.

Predictably the City, having forced the price down to a level that suggests the only way the shares can go is up, was piling in last night. Advisers to Somerfield were feeling bitter. But this is the second time the company, in one

guise or another, had looked at a float, and it had to happen now. There would have been no third time lucky.

A game of two bids

YOU are a director and large shareholder in Leeds United Football Club. You receive two serious offers to buy the club from public companies. Do you accept the one that promises £12 million for buying new players? Or take the other, promising £15 million for the team?

If your answer is the latter, you are not acting in the interests of football and deserve no protection in the High Court. That is why the wonderfully named Mr Justice Rafferty threw out the attempt by Peter Gilman, the Leeds deputy chairman, to stop media minnow Caspian's £16.5 million purchase of Leeds. While Mr Gilman's legal case might not have held water, one has to wonder why Leslie Silver, the outgoing Leeds chairman, and Bill Fotherby, incoming Leeds chairman, are so keen on Cas-

pian's bid. After all, Leeds hired NM Rothschild, the merchant bank, which promptly advised that a rival £20 million offer from Conrad was more attractive. But instead both Mr Fotherby and Mr Silver stand to lose £1 million apiece by going with Caspian.

In fighting Mr Gilman, Caspian managed to issue a circular which contradicts its listing particulars, a press release which contradicts its circular and redevelopment plans for land Leeds does not even own. Yet it looks like walking away with one of the Premier League's leading teams at a price that is less than a twelfth of the current value of Manchester United. Caspian is perpetrating daylight robbery. And now Mr Gilman's legal case has been thrown out, it looks like no one can stop it. Funny game, football.

Carpet-bagger

THE original carpet-baggers, long before the term was attached to greedy queues outside building societies, were northern US politicians foisted on the defeated Confederacy, to the disgust of local voters. How apt the epithet seems for Brandon Gough, Kent resident newly elected to the chair of Yorkshire Water. At yesterday's rowdy annual meeting Mr Gough was equally welcomed by the locals.

Takeover bid for Suter confirmed

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

SUTER, the engineering company, yesterday confirmed it had agreed a £275 million takeover bid from Ascot, bringing to an end the 15-year reign of David Abell, its controversial chairman.

The offer values Mr Abell's shares and warrants at £10 million. He also holds share options valued at around £300,000 and has a contract worth £700,000 if he leaves the company. No formal decision has been made on the future of the Suter directors, but only Bob Morris, deputy managing director, has been offered a position on the Ascot board.

Ascot is offering £763 in cash and 435 Ascot shares for every 1,000 Suter shares, equivalent to 225p a share. Shares in Ascot yesterday fell 24p to 334p, valuing Suter at £275 million. Shares in Suter rose 18p to close at 215p.

Ascot will take on £11 million of debt to fund the deal but said it expected to substantially reduce its borrowing by November 1998. The com-

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669

MAM to safeguard Cairn rights issue

By CARL MORTISHED

MERCURY Asset Management has agreed to underwrite the whole of a £50 million rights issue by Cairn Energy at the market price. Discretionary clients of the fund management group will act as underwriters of last resort for the entire 1-for-5 share issue, priced at 280p, compared with a 281p Cairn closing price on Wednesday.

The money raised will fund development of the Sangu gas field in offshore Bangladesh — estimated to contain 1 trillion cubic feet of gas. MAM, which controls 11.3 per cent of Cairn, is

Tempus, page 26

*Manual transmission. **Manufacturer's recommended retail price, correct at time of going to press. Is for the XJ Sport 3.2 litre including cost of delivery, number plates, a full tank of petrol and £140 for 12 months' road fund licence. Offer applies to Jaguar Privilege finance schemes arranged prior to 31 August 1996 and excludes foreign costs (tyre, fluid and oil top-up). Written quotations available on request from Jaguar Financial Services Limited, Turnford Place, Great Cambridge Road, Turnford, Borehamwood, Herts. EN10 6NH. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Finance subject to status to over 18 year olds only.

**THE
TIMES**

**CITY
DIARY**

Mr Merseyside bows out

JOHN MOORES, eldest son of Sir John Moores, founder of the Littlewoods Organisation, is retiring from the board after 50 years with the company. Known as Mr Merseyside, the old-stoic joined Littlewoods straight after leaving school, to be made an executive director four years later. As Chancellor of The Liverpool John Moores University and freeman of the City of Liverpool, one of Moore's most treasured titles is his presidency of the Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society. At 67, he has bred pedigree cattle for almost 40 years.

AFTER a tense legal battle, the whistle has been blown, and Caspian, the media publishing group, has emerged as the winner in its pre-season "unfriendly" for Leeds United. Defenders-turned-strikers Edge & Ellison, the firm of legal advisers, was cheering from the sideline all the way. So, is it Elland Road season tickets all round? Perhaps not — David Mandell, lead partner on the deal, is an Arsenal supporter.

Cresswell's rules
DAVID CRESSWELL may not be a well-known name outside City circles but millions of investors have reason to be grateful to him. As a final act before departing today for a new charity venture, called Gifts in Kind, the spokesman for the Investors Compensation Scheme, the ultimate safety net for people who lose money through bad advice, theft or fraud, has penned a handy fact sheet telling us all how to avoid the investment sharks. Not only is Cresswell's 101 Golden Rules for Investors required reading, but it might also reduce the £100 million the ICS has paid out since 1988.



"There weren't many other applicants"

Tin box estate

ROCKETER Estate, home of the founder of Metal Box Company, is for sale at offers of £975,000. Surrounded by formal gardens and paddocks, Sir Robert Bartow bought the 80-acre estate in 1942. The wealthy industrialist lived on the estate in the woodlands of Wendover until his death in 1976. It was while living in the Chilterns that the tin box maker was knighted for his contribution to the ship building industry. Margaret Rawlings, the actress and wealthy industrialist's wife, who once joked that she had married a tinker, died last May, aged 90.

Fountainhead

FIDELITY Investments, located in a lavish 31-acre estate in Kent, is forking out a fortune for a huge revolving fountain. In anticipation of chairman Ned Johnson III's arrival in England, builders are working hammer and tongs, under his instruction from across the pond, to get the fountain finished by August. In spite of the water shortage in Kent last year, the world's largest fund management organisation is determined to have the fountain up and running by the time Johnson touches down on its hallowed turf in Tonbridge.

MORAG PRESTON



British Gas's application relates to the first generation North Sea gas fields, in which development started in the 1960s and the early 1970s

Pressure rises as British Gas puts Government in the dock

Christine Buckley examines the issues behind the £1 billion writ and weighs up the implications

Wraps are stacking up in the gas industry. No fewer than 28 were issued yesterday as British Gas dropped the bombshell that it wanted £1 billion — plus interest — back from the Government for tax over-payment.

At issue is the levy exercised on gas by the Government and contract law. But the weightier context of the surprise move by the company is British Gas's obligations to buy a large quantity of gas at prices higher than it can sell it for. And to do that while facing a harsh regulatory price review.

The Department of Trade and Industry thinks British Gas has got its tax law modified. But should the company be proved right, the DTI will issue 27 parallel writs to the one it received from British Gas. These would be served against gas producers and would protect the Government, and hence taxpayers, from the blow of repaying British Gas.

The argument revolves around the tax paid on gas — the Gas Levy — which currently delivers to the Chancellor of the Exchequer 4p a therm when gas arrives from offshore fields at the beach. That tax delivered £150 million in the past financial year and has brought in £3.2 billion over the past ten years. The levy is charged on the field producing the gas.

It was condemned by some as a windfall tax to capture parts of the industry which had escaped the Petroleum Revenue Tax. Any agreement that British Gas set at the time is likely to be exacerbated by the fact that gas prices have plunged and it is locked into buying the fuel at prices way above the market rate. It is effectively now paying a windfall tax on contracts from which it is bleeding a great deal of money.

British Gas and the DTI will now thrash out the legal arguments. If British Gas serves the writ on the Government, the DTI will bounce its parallel actions on the gas producers. So far the producers, which include Shell, BP, Amerada Hess, Lusaco and Enterprise, are reluctant to comment on the DTI's possible action. Their lawyers are, however, sitting through the fall of negotiations, but the producers are

likely to turn up the pressure in the talks. It could be that the move is a strong-arm attempt to focus the minds of the gas producers, but its effectiveness will lie in its legal legitimacy and the veracity of British Gas's case on contract law and taxation.

The oldest contracts are those which have undergone no substantial change. Arrangements drawn up between British Gas and gas producers on first generation fields have evolved in relation to the changing structure of energy taxation and in relation to the varying development of the fields themselves. The contracts in principle cover the development of the field for the duration of its life. But the development of the field is something that cannot be anticipated with absolute accuracy at the onset of the contract. It is the degree to which the evolution of the field affects tax legislation on which British Gas is arguing its legal case.

British Gas is reluctant to expand on its legal application, but it is likely to involve the amount of tax it has paid on fields that have developed beyond the company's wishes or needs and from which excess gas has been sold to other gas buyers. Under arrangements such as these, the producer would be required to pay part of the levy relating to the field which it would then seek to



unlikely to accept their fate and proportion of the burden of £1 billion plus interest without mounting a legal battle of their own.

Many of the companies facing protective action from the DTI are currently in talks with British Gas over renegotiating the take-or-pay contracts. Under these contracts, British Gas faces a shortfall of about £4 billion. Although the tax and renegotiation issues are separate, British Gas's action is

likely to turn up the pressure in the talks. It could be that the move is a strong-arm attempt to focus the minds of the gas producers, but its effectiveness will lie in its legal legitimacy and the veracity of British Gas's case on contract law and taxation.

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Leaseholders gain fresh rights but who will fund the Bill?



John Gummer needs the money to pay for tribunals

prospect of cheaper access to justice in landlord/tenant disputes through Leasehold Valuation Tribunals. Even the Government's critics, including the Labour Party and campaigners for leasehold reform, welcome 'many' of the changes, although they argue that they do not go far enough.

The centrepiece of the latest reforms is the establishment of Leasehold Valuation Tribunals to handle service charge disputes and the appointment of managers to take over if necessary from incompetent landlords. This, ministers argue, would solve one of the most glaring defects of the existing system. At present, disputes between tenants and landlords can only be resolved in the county court, with tenants run-

ning the risk of incurring large legal costs from landlords equipped with expensive lawyers. Not surprisingly, few leaseholders have been prepared to take this risk.

The tribunals will charge a fee of £500 per application, so leaseholders can share the cost if they apply jointly. Tribunals will not award costs to either side (but there is nothing to stop landlords reclaiming their costs through service charges if leases allow this).

The Government expects a large increase in the number of challenges to landlords when the cheaper system starts. If there is to be a large increase in demand for LVT hearings, many more tribunals will be needed. In

London, for example, the LVT network is so clogged that people are waiting six months for a hearing and four months for a result, according to the Leasehold Enfranchisement Advisory Service.

So where is the money coming from to fund the increased network? The answer is from existing, stretched Environment Department budgets, unless the department can prise more money out of the Treasury in the next public expenditure round.

Because of the Treasury's reluctance to spend money, the Government tried to pass the full cost on to the leaseholders. But such was the outcry that it was forced to compromise. The £500 fee still does not satisfy critics who argue that the cost should be no more than that for the county court, a maximum of about £120. The Campaign Against Residential Leasehold Abuse (Carla) described the £500 charge as outrageous.

The figure was accepted by both Houses of Parliament just hours before the Housing Act found its way on to the statute books. But now the gap between payment and cost of LVTs has to be bridged somehow by the public purse, as does the cost of funding extra tribunals. A consultation paper is being drawn up.

Many are in no doubt that extra money will have to be found to make the proposed system work. Or the clamour for further reform will start up again louder than ever.

SARA McCONNELL

Yearning for just a small touch of inflation

Alasdair Murray detects a mood of nostalgia in some companies

Inflation is bad for business, or so the economic orthodoxy of the past two decades has maintained. Businesses need a low inflation environment so that they can plan without throwing medium-term investment and pricing strategies into financial turmoil.

The UK is enjoying one of the longest periods of low inflation in recent memory, with the headline retail price index falling last month to just 2.1 per cent.

Surprisingly, however, not every company is entirely happy with this apparent breakthrough. It may be only a quiet murmur at present, tucked away in the fine print of a trading statement or made as an aside at an interview, but if you listen carefully you can definitely hear the distinct sound of nostalgia for the high inflation days of the last decade. This nostalgia is most prominent among retailers who have struggled in recent years to persuade disillusioned consumers to spend. The pressures of competition have forced retailers into tough price-cutting battles and even now, when consumer confidence is starting to return, companies are finding it tough to restore battered margins.

British Gas has paid more than £5.6 billion under the Gas Levy since its introduction. Under legal constraints exerted by the Limitation Act, British Gas is acting to recover tax paid over the past ten years. Its legal advice has indicated that in order to initiate legal action it must move within six years of the Royal Assent of the Finance Act. The sixth anniversary is today.

If British Gas wins its tax battle, it will undoubtedly be a splash of good news in an otherwise troubled period for the company. Whether it will be of sufficient magnitude to hang out any flags is another matter. Payment of the £1 billion and the interest would be likely to be staged and the company would also be likely to face calls to pass some of its benefit to customers.

British Gas is reluctant to expand on its legal application, but it is likely to involve the amount of tax it has paid on fields that have developed beyond the company's wishes or needs and from which excess gas has been sold to other gas buyers. Under arrangements such as these, the producer would be required to pay part of the levy relating to the field which it would then seek to

sector faces a similar conundrum. In the Eighties, the sector boomed as aspirational marketing campaigns were used to persuade consumers to drink ever more expensive spirits. But after the collapse in consumer confidence, the industry has found it almost impossible to force through any price rises.

The drinks sector has underperformed the FTSE 100 for the past three years and even former blue-chip stocks have been forced to think the unthinkable in attempts to break the cycle — in the case of Guinness pondering but rejecting a £13 billion takeover of Grand Metropolitan. But Allied Domecq has probably been hurt most in recent years, suffering a 21 per cent fall in full-year profits after it managed to force through only a below-inflation 1 per cent rise on its spirits. Housebuilders have

also struggled as the lack of house price inflation has discouraged buyers. The builders have found it impossible to increase prices in line with rising costs and heavy discounting has again hurt margins. Inflation also underpins balance-sheet values, making the company's financially buoyant even in years that sales are limited. The result has been a huge consolidation within the industry, with some major companies pulling out of altogether.

Property developers have also been hit because the current low rents make new developments unattractive.

Lack of inflation of net asset values has made the companies a less attractive investment for institutions seeking a hedge fund.

A small dose of inflation would almost certainly do wonders for the spirits of long-suffering directors at companies hit by low inflation. Many consumers would also appreciate a return to less fiscally strict times.

But for the older section of the population, asset and savings heavy, inflation is a nightmare, wiping out years of work in an instant. With the international markets and an increasingly large section of the voting population dead set against a return of inflation, the inflation-loving sector of British industry realises it will have to find a new trick to restore decimated balance sheets.

Quite simply, companies have found that it difficult to pass on price rises in a low inflation environment. When consumers are not enjoying hefty annual wage rises they are reluctant to spend any more than they have to on items such as food and drink.

Meanwhile, the sword of Ofgas still hangs over British Gas with its pricing formula for TransCo, the pipelines division. The controversial moves announced by TransCo in May created a storm of protest from the company and from British Gas shareholders. After initial plans for a formula threatened to cut revenues by £50 million a year, British Gas argued that it would have to cut the workforce of TransCo to meet targets. Since then Ofgas has twice stalled final proposals in what is being interpreted by some parties as a prelude to softening the formula.

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■ THEATRE 1
War, lechery and cynicism: *Troilus and Cressida* is given a bold new treatment by the RSC



■ THEATRE 2
Loose Restoration: *Rogues to Riches* brings unsophisticated silliness to a Farquhar comedy

THE ARTS



■ MUSIC
Mark Elder conducts the Proms premiere of Bax's *Spring Fire*, written over 80 years ago



■ TOMORROW
Gospel truth: the music of the Deep South is big business, and Kirk Franklin is the biggest name

THEATRE: The Bard in cynical mood; Farquhar with the sting removed; a mixed bag at a Polish drama festival

The love of war in a lust cause

The ravish'd Helen, Menelaus's queen, with wanton Paris sleeps — "and that's the quarrel!", walls Richard McCabe's Thersites in his best believe-it-or-not voice at the opening of Ian Judge's production. A glance at the text confirms that the words actually belong to Prologue, but it would be ungrateful to complain of their hijacking when the speaker is in every sense giving the performance of the evening. With his pale, bloated face, lank hair and awful ingratiating smirk, his Thersites is part depraved clown, part gloating chorus and, when he assures us that all is war and lechery, very much the voice of Shakespeare's most cynically modern play.

Boldly, inventively, but with uneven success, Judge's revival seeks to suggest that war is a kind of lechery and lechery a sort of war. Homo-eroticism patently has its place among the Grecian tents and, when Philip Quast's Achilles wants to menace Louis Hiley's hefty, sweaty Hector, he does so by slipping out of his gown and flashing his naked body at him. I have never seen so many jockstraps, rippling pectorals and rolling buttocks on a classical stage. At times the Trojan War might be the battle of the Chippendales.

I do not think that Will, even when in hot pursuit of Mr W. H., would altogether have approved. Where is the exhaustion, the dilapidation of a war that has, after all, been dragging on for seven exhilarating years? It is there in John Gunter's marvellous set, mainly a vast metal wall, a grey patchwork of rumpled tin and corrugated iron with bumps and rills and patches of red paint. It is there in Edward de Souza's Agamemnon, less Homer's "leader of men" than Lewis Carroll's flummoxed White Knight. But it eludes the hunks and heroes on show.

And if there is too much sensuality on the battlefield, there is too little in the bedroom. Both Joseph Fiennes's Troilus and Victoria Hamilton's Cressida try to emphasise their own immaturity and vulnerability and, hence, the fragility of their love. That is fine, up to a point.

Troilus and Cressida RST, Stratford

But Fiennes introduces so much adolescent throb and romantic sob into his performance that you feel he is playing Romeo in his whingeing Rosaline period rather than the Troilus whom Philip Voss's fine Ulysses calls a true knight and second Hector, as "firm as wood" as of deed.

Still, he has his vivid moments, as does that brilliantly precocious young actress Victoria Hamilton. In Troy her Cressida is bright, pert, sweet, with a slight undertow of melancholy and, when she is wrested from Troilus and handed to the Greeks, she is clearly a shaken, disoriented girl. But is this enough to explain her sexual defection? Is Ulysses merely voicing 9th-century sexism when he says that "her wanton spirits look out at every joint and motive of her body"? Hamilton has the quick intelligence of the survivor, but nothing much is peering from her ankles and elbows, least of all wantonness.

Still, there are plenty of other characters to justify Shakespeare's scepticism about love, heroism and the whole damned thing. Clive Francis's Pandarus slithers and undulates about, looking as if he has wandered in from *The Mikado* but exuding sleaze with terrific relish.

Ray Fearon's Paris and Katia Caballero's Helen seem less a golden than a gilded couple, down to the weird glittering crewcut that substitutes for his hair. They saunter onstage in their bangles, proceed not only to pioneer French kissing but to rehearse a few holds from the *Kamasutra*, and depart as serenely as celebrities from a movie premiere in Beverly Hills. And it is for this pair that Greeks and Trojans are dying. There, as elsewhere, Judge has made the Bard's point for him.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Puppy love: Joseph Fiennes as Troilus and the "brilliantly precocious" Victoria Hamilton as Cressida — too much "adolescent throb and romantic sob" in their affair

Not really naughty and much too nice

Another Restoration comedy gets rough handling, regressed as a musical. Three summers ago, *Lust, Circum! 1661* crudely attempted to pump up Wycherley's *The Country Wife* for the West End. That was a sorry flop. Now, arriving from America, *Rogues to Riches* proven little better. Robert Seva's book is very loosely based on Farquhar's sharp

comedy *The Beaux' Stratagem*. Wendy Toye's production offers too much unsophisticated silliness jazzed up with loud colours and a mishmash of periwigs and 1950s quiffs.

The fundamental story survives. Aimwell and Archer (Robin Hart and Anthony Drewe), two roving gents who have squandered their fortunes on the pleasures of

Rogues to Riches Watermill, Newbury

London, hole up in Lichfield. Incognito as master and servant, they make a beeline for the finest local skirts with purses attached.

Someone, however, has been messing with the plot. We now have a spacious masked ball and pointless escapade with highwaymen and ladies disguised as monks. Fragments of Farquhar's script survive but amid new chat that waters down his colourful language and wit. More irksomely, the songs, scored by Lynn Crigler, though tuneful and varied, are flatly sentimental compared to Farquhar's cynical spirit. We lose his radical "happy" ending where lovers danced to celebrate a divorce settlement.

Ah well, the company at least are cheery. They harmonise with aplomb and gusto, refreshingly accompanied only by a piano and cello. Peter Moreton makes a entertainingly hopeless highwayman, blundering around eagerly but with a scared-stiff stare. Jacqueline Charlesworth's giggling chambermaid has pleasing bounce. She kicks off with an amusing mock aria, moaning about the boredom of this pastoral idyll, lyrics that could have been written for the serenely scenic Watermill.

The major hitch is that our rakish heroes are damably low on naughty spark. Hart's Aimwell grins handsomely but at nothing in particular. Drewe's Archer brings out none of the jokes about a flamboyantly suave chap concealed in a lackey's livery. Still, he does rise to some smoothie swankiness when

tickling ladies' fancies.

There are also moments of irresistible ridiculousness with absurdly tame sword fights casually conducted with one hand through side doors.

A trio of friars also sidestep their way through the drinking song, chorusing (halloo-hah) to love and ale.

KATE BASSETT
MARILYN KINGWELL



Losing the plot: Sarah Jane Hassell and Robin Hart in Robert Seva's Restoration musical, *Rogues to Riches*

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CONCERTS: Arnold Bax makes a belated debut at the Albert Hall; plus a contemporary tangent in Chester

Spring comes late to the Proms

BBC SO/Elder
Albert Hall/Radio 3

of Spring year — it was not premiered until 1970, long after its composer's death. Conceived on a symphonic scale in five interconnected movements, it was first considered difficult: its sensuous scoring does make big demands on a large orchestra. But much of the musical interest is in the orchestration — no pulsating Stravinskian

rhythms to conjure up pagan orgies, only an infinite variety of instrumental colouring.

Bax can sound patchy, but not when performances have the fervent intensity Elder brought to the music here. With equal care and passion he evoked the dark, enchanted woods of the opening, the rapturous love music of the fourth movement, and the final, frenzied appearance of Bacchus's attendants. Elder gave a no less loving performance of Dvořák's concert overture *In Nature's Realm*; a

more earthy view of nature in a work that applies symphonic logic to spirited, spontaneous sounding themes.

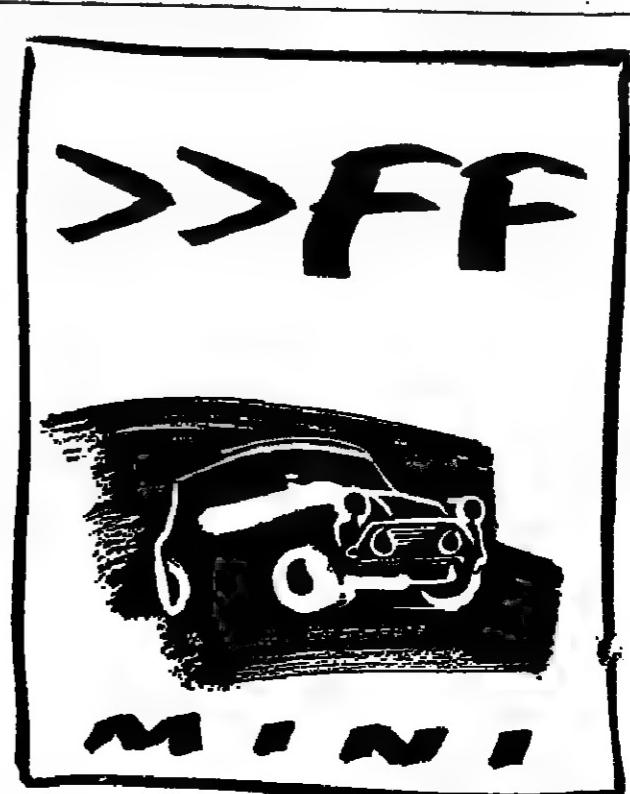
The theme of nature had been developed before the interval, not least in the Viermeister music from *Tannhäuser*; but as bacchanals go, this one was too well-behaved. At least the women of the Trinity College of Music Chamber Choir sang alluringly as sirens. Even in Wagner, Elder is worth hearing, but it was a pity that having shaped a dark, soft-

grained opening and coaxed very precise playing, he failed to maintain the magic.

The evening's big disappointment was Christine Brewer's singing of the Four

Last Songs. With her sumptuous tone and substantial soprano she is probably as good in Strauss as anything. But she poured out vocalise that robbed the songs of their deep expressiveness. The laboured accompaniments did not help.

JOHN ALLISON



Reflecting history, not repeating it

IN THEORY, there should have been a good audience for Psappha's concert at the Chester Summer Music Festival. The artistic director, Andrew Burn, had led his audience gently round the Schumann circle for the first 12 days of the festival, keeping in touch with Mendelssohn and Chopin and Brahms. Then he had offered the least abrupt of tangents into the contemporary scene.

But it doesn't work like that. Just as you have to know that the Wesley Methodist Church is not the severe venue the name might suggest, you have

interpretation with Psappha confirmed — is the third movement, which is moving, not by means of allusions to Schumann melody or harmony, but by means of a passionate and sustained development of a mere accompaniment figure. Long before that point, in fact, nostalgia has been converted into a new, intensely personal experience.

Although the background is rarely so prominently presented as foreground material, much new music is projected on to an existing image. The images behind Piers Hell-

gerald LARNER

THE TIMES

JAZZ ALBUMS

Dead
inspired

DUSTY
DELLA

CHRIS
CHRISTIE



■ POP 1

Talented, Irish and 24, Sinéad Lohan presses at the limits of the folk singer's art



■ POP 2

The Sex Pistols' Finsbury Park comeback is released on CD — and proves to be good stuff



■ POP 3

Irish newcomers, The Frames DC, scale the peaks of "blind love and black poetry" on a new album



■ POP 4

At the age of 51, Jimmie Dale Gilmore emerges as an unlikely cult hero for the Nineties

JAZZ ALBUMS

Dead inspired

DAVID MURRAY OCTET

Dark Star — the Music of the Grateful Dead (Astor Place TCD 4002) ALTHOUGH the juxtaposition of one of America's most highly regarded contemporary jazz saxophonists with a band epitomising hippie-dom at its most unreconstructed might seem anomalous, David Murray's association with the Dead is based on a genuine appreciation of their music and thorough advocacy of their improvisatory spirit.

The album springs from a concert at Madison Square Gardens in September 1993 at which Murray and blues harpist James Cotton joined the rock band, and the octet's "avant-gardeck" style brings a rumbustious bribe to such familiar Dead fare as *Shakedown Street*. The real meat of the album, though, lies in Murray's more adventurous arrangements of *Estimated Prophet* and — the highlight — *Dark Star*, which combines swirling free jazz with a suitably dreamy, discursive trumpet improvisation on the plaintive psychedelic anthem.

JIM MULLEN
We Go Back
(EFZ 1018)
GLASWEIGIAN guitarist Jim Mullen is still best known for his 1970s fusion work but, as his faultless playing on this album attests, he is, at heart, a superb straight-ahead jazz musician.

We Go Back collects some of Mullen's favourite tunes from his 30-year career, intersperses them with a number of jaunty originals, and feeds them through his own neat but eloquent, thumb-picked, single-note style. Impeccably supported by pianist Gareth Williams, bassist Mick Hutton and the precise yet supple drumming of Gary Husband, Mullen demonstrates that post-Hendrix pyrotechnics and electronic trickery are not the only routes to exciting contemporary guitar music.

CHRIS PARKER

Alan Jackson makes the mistake of congratulating singer Sinéad Lohan on the excellence of her debut folk album

OK then, who does she think she is?

Although she performs at the Cambridge Folk Festival today and tomorrow, Ireland's Sinéad Lohan bristles at any assumption that she must, therefore, be a folk singer. That her highly impressive debut album, *Who Do You Think I Am*, has been greeted as one of the best folk releases of the year, or that she has recently completed the second of two British tours supporting the American queen of that medium, Joan Baez, is also neither here nor there.

Talented, intratable and just 24 years old, she has no patience with those who would stereotype her.

• Maybe I've been a little spoilt, and that's where my attitude comes from

"People see a female singer-songwriter with an acoustic guitar and no band and promptly pigeonhole me," she says. But, while Lohan may turn out to be something very different to a folk artist, there is no denying that she has made a folk record, and a very good one at that. However, much of the responsibility — she stops short of saying "the blame" — for the fact it fits so decisively into that genre lies with its producer, Declan Shint.

A long-time musical associate of the melodic Irish singer Mary Black, he heard Lohan singing in a small club in her home city of Cork in 1992 and made it his mission to put her quite lovely voice on record. Shint took two-and-a-half years to shape a project that is, musically at least, almost indistinguishable from any of the polite but well-received albums he has produced for Black.

Therein lies the rub for Lohan. "I am eternally grateful to Declan for recording me in the first place," she says.

"It wasn't that I was gearing myself towards such a career; more that I wanted to avoid

more than a cornflakes packet.

Working, and liked the idea of something that could, potentially, make you a lot of money," she says. "Initially it covered a lot of the business side, so there was no call to sing or write at all — and I honestly didn't know I could."

"Then one day we all had to sing a song we'd written, and I thought: 'Right, if they all laugh I'll pretend it's not my song at all, and I'll go downtown tomorrow and find out about a career in nursing.'

"But the reaction was so positive and has continued to be." Here Lohan offers a rare smile. "Maybe I've been a little spoilt. Maybe that's where my attitude comes from."

If so, that attitude softens only infrequently. When I observe that (praise indeed) some reviewers had likened her debut collection to early Joni Mitchell, she scoffs: "It's that woman singer-songwriter with an acoustic guitar thing again. I had to go out and buy one of her records to see what they were talking about." And when I ask where she found the band that has done so much to bolster the live presentation of her songs, she is sharper still: "On the back of a cornflakes packet."

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THE TIMES FRIDAY JULY 26 1996

House of Lords

No duty of care over roads

Stovin v Wise, Norfolk County Council (Third Party)
Before Lord Goff of Chieveley, Lord Jauncey of Tullichettle, Lord Slynn of Hadley, Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead and Lord Hoffmann [Speeches July 24]

A statutory power granted to a public body did not give rise to a common law duty of care, where none already existed, nor did it put the public body under any legal duty to make any reasonable decisions, and a failure to act under that power could not make the public body liable to a member of the public who might sustain damage.

The answer to the question whether a statutory duty gave rise to a private cause of action was a matter of construction of the particular statute and depended on the policy of the statute.

The House of Lords so stated allowing by a majority (Lord Slynn and Lord Nicholls dissenting), an appeal by the third party to the action, Norfolk County Council, as the highway authority, from a decision dated February 16, 1994 of the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Kennedy and Lord Justice Rook) (*The Times* March 3, 1994; [1994] 1 WLR 1124), whereby the court dismissed an appeal by the county council from an order dated July 27, 1992 of Judge Crawford, QC, sitting at the judge of the Queen's Bench Division.

In an action by Thomas Michael Stovin for damages for sustaining injuries in a road traffic accident allegedly caused by the negligence of Rita Wise, the judge apportioned blame as to 70 per cent to Mrs Wise and 30 per cent to the council. Mr Stovin took no part in the appeal.

In December 1988 Mr Stovin was riding a motor cycle along Station Road, Wymondham when he collided with a motor vehicle being driven by Mrs Wise out of a junction on Mr Stovin's left across his path. He was seriously injured.

The junction was not a busy one but was known by the county council to be dangerous because the view of road users turning out of the junction with Cemetery Road into Station Road was restricted by a bank on adjoining land. Accidents in similar situations had occurred at the junction on at least three previous occasions.

In January 1989 a divisional surveyor of the council, after a site meeting at the junction, accepted that a visibility problem existed and recommended removal of part of the bank. The council agreed that the work would be carried out providing the owner of the land, British Rail, agreed. British Rail had not responded to the council's proposal before Mr Stovin's accident notwithstanding a further site meeting at which the representatives British Rail and council were present.

Mr Stovin's claim against Mrs Wise was settled. Mrs Wise had joined the council as third party, alleging that it was negligent and in breach of its statutory duty by failing to take reasonable measures to reduce the danger to road users at the junction.

Causing fear does not obstruct highway

Kent County Council v Holland
Before Lord Justice Schiemann and Mr Justice Brian Smedley [Judgment July 22]

Causing fear in pedestrians was not an obstruction of the highway for the purposes of section 17(1) of the Highways Act 1980.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held when dismissing an appeal by way of case stated by Kent County Council from the dismissal by Gravesend Justices on October 10, 1995 of an information against Graham Holland that he wilfully obstructed the free passage along a footpath contrary to section 17(1) of the 1980 Act.

Mr Holland owned the property adjacent to the path, part of the boundary of which comprised large gauge wire mesh. He allowed his rottweiler dogs to act in a menacing way towards people using the path: they would jump up at the fence barking furiously and on occasion their jaws would protrude beyond the line of the fence.

Mr John Bryant for the appellants

Humour no shield for contempt

Attorney-General v British Broadcasting Corporation Same v Hat Trick Productions Ltd
Before Lord Justice Auld and Mr Justice Sachs [Judgment June 12]

That words were spoken on a humorous and irreverent television programme did not diminish the risk of serious prejudice to those involved in pending criminal proceedings.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so stated when allowing the motion of the Attorney-General for committal of the British Broadcasting Corporation and Hat Trick Productions Ltd for contempt of court arising out of the BBC's television broadcast of a programme *Have I Got News For You*, produced by Hat Trick. The programme was broadcast on April 29, 1994 and repeated the following day. Each was fined £10,000.

Mr Philip Havers, QC, for the Attorney-General; Mr Andrew Caldecott, QC, for the BBC and Hat Trick.

LORD JUSTICE AUOLD said that the Attorney-General's case was that the programme was in contempt of court because it created a substantial risk of serious prejudice to the pending criminal trial of Kevin and Ian Maxwell and others at the Central Criminal Court on charges of alleged fraud, and thereby breached the strict liability rule in sections 1 and 2 of

otherwise be a source of physical danger to users of property.

Seventh, a common law duty would not impose on the authority any more onerous obligation, so far as its behaviour was concerned, than its public law obligations.

Finally, and critically, the consequence of a concurrent common law duty would be that in the event of breach the loss, so far as measured in terms of money, would fall on the highway authority or, if incurred, on highway authorities generally.

These factors, taken together, constituted special circumstances of sufficient weight for the crucial question to be answered "Yes". There was here sufficient proximity.

LORD HOFFMANN dissenting said that the crucial question was whether a highway authority, aware of a danger, owed to road users a concurrent duty to act as would a responsible authority. In the circumstances, the authority was potentially liable in damages if it failed to attain that standard.

Built into that question were several features which, in combination, pointed to the conclusion that the existence of such a duty and such a liability would indeed be fair and reasonable.

First, the subject matter was physical injury. The existence of a source of danger exposed road users to a risk of serious even fatal injury. Road users, especially those using the highway with the threat of road, were vulnerable. They were dependent on highway authorities fulfilling their statutory responsibilities.

Second, the authority knew of the danger. When an authority was aware of a danger it had knowledge road users might not have.

Third, in the present case, had the council complied with its public law obligations the danger would have been removed and the accident would not have happened. In such a case a highway authority could properly be regarded as responsible for the accident just as much as if its employees had carried out road works carelessly and thereby created a danger.

Fourth, this was an area where Parliament had recognised that public authorities should be liable in damages for omissions as well as actions. The Highways (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1961 abrogated the old rule exempting the highway authority from liability for non-repairs of highways. A highway authority was liable in damages for failing to take reasonable care to keep the highway safe. But that is not what the Highways Act 1980 says.

Although those powers did not actually include a power which would have enabled a council to sue to recover the cost of repairing the highway, there was power under section 9 to serve a notice requiring the bank to be removed. The power was conferred for the purpose of "the prevention of danger arising from obstruction to the view of persons using the highway".

The allegation was not that the council failed to use that power, but that its existence showed that one of the purposes for which Parliament contemplated that the highway authority would spend its money was in the removal of exactly the kind of obstructions which caused the accident in the instant case.

Since *Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Trustees v Gibbs* (1866) 1 LR 1 HL 93 it had been clear law that, in the absence of express statutory authority, a public body was, in principle, liable for torts in the same way as a private person. But its statutory powers or duties might restrict its liability.

For example, it might be authorised to do something which necessarily involved committing what would otherwise be a tort. In such a case it would not be liable. *Allen v Gulf Oil Refining Ltd* [1981] AC 1001. Or it might have discretionary power which failed to do things to relieve the public of a particular problem notwithstanding that it involved a foreseeable risk of damage to others. In such a case, a bare fact of exercise of the discretion would not attract liability. *X (Miner) v Beforeshire County Council* (*The Times* June 30, 1995; [1995] 2 AC 633 and Dorset Yacht Co Ltd v Home Office [1970] AC 1004).

Therefore, the minimum pre-conditions for basing a duty of care on the existence of a statutory power, if it could be done at all, were, first, that it would have been irrational not to have exercised the power, so that there was in effect a public law duty to act, and second, that there were exceptional grounds for holding that the policy of the statute made the public authority liable to pay compensation for foreseeable loss caused by the duty not being performed.

The question is whether anything should be done about a junction, here, was at all times firmly within the area of the council's discretion. As it was not under a public law duty to do the work, the first condition for the imposition of a duty of care was not satisfied. But even if it was, the second condition would not be satisfied. There were no grounds on which it could be said that the public law duty should give rise to an obligation to compensate persons who had suffered loss because the power was not exercised.

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EDUCATION

John O'Leary on a scheme that could halt England's alarming slide in the world education league



Old fashioned 'whole-class teaching' in Wigan in 1939: should we go back to basics and adopt some of the successful teaching methods used on the continent?

What's wrong with our maths?

Evidence of British under-achievement in mathematics is now so compelling that yesterday's Ofsted report on overseas comparisons was barely challenged. The focus of debate has switched from whether there is a problem to how it can be tackled.

Professor David Reynolds of Newcastle University found that primary school children in the countries of the Pacific Rim were well ahead of their counterparts in Britain, despite much larger classes. And comparable European nations were also forging ahead.

Any lingering doubts about the small sample used in the Ofsted report will be dispelled when the main international study of standards in science and mathematics appears in November. That will show England sliding at an alarming rate: from 3 per cent above the international average six years ago to 3 per cent below now.

English 13-year-olds are bottom of a sub-set of nine comparable countries out of the 41 taking part in the Third International Mathematics and Science Study. Only the Americans tested for the study answered as few questions correctly as the English in Year 8 of the school system, and even the Americans were marginally ahead in Year 9. Table-topping Singapore was 26 percentage points ahead of England in both years.

Today comes more detailed advice from the one authority which has systematically adapted European methods for the British classroom. Although it is too soon for the six primary schools in Barking and

Dagenham to demonstrate the success of their Anglo-Swiss regime, the organisers of the project have drawn preliminary conclusions about the changes required in primary education.

Professor Sig Prais's analysis will be published next week in the journal of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research. Like Professor Reynolds, his chief aim is to ensure that more of each primary school class make progress together. The Ofsted report notes that England is the only country in its study where the gap in achievement between the brightest and the slowest grows in primary schools.

In Barking and Dagenham, whole-class teaching has been the basis of the new strategy. Professor Prais accepts that the term covers a multitude of styles, but the system

must encourage participation by all the children if it is to work.

The emphasis in the project, especially with younger pupils, is on mental arithmetic. Much of each lesson is devoted to a teacher-led question and answer session. This approach to teaching is some distance from the lecturing style that so often springs to the mind of English teachers when 'whole-class teaching' is mentioned," he says.

Professor Prais adds that, with better teaching materials to ensure that pupils are able to consolidate what they have learnt with more exercises, Swiss methods could bring improvements in British schools. But they may not be enough on their own: continental schools may have organisational lessons to teach us as well.

The first area is in the age of entry and progress through school.

Professor Prais advocates at least three to four months' flexibility in the age at which a child starts school, recognising the varying rates of development among young children. Parents would be given the final decision, informed by "school-readiness" testing.

Greater flexibility in continental schools makes it easier for them to operate mixed-ageability primary classes because pupils are grouped by "gestational age" rather than by calendar age. Pupils of all ages are also likely to be held back a year if they fail to reach required standards.

Continental classes are often split into two for reading and arithmetic, enabling the teacher to concentrate on individual needs while a teaching assistant supervises the rest of the pupils. On some days, half the class may come to school early and

the other leave late.

Professor Prais says: "The arrangement is similar in intention to but more effective in its application than that current in English schools where a teacher occasionally spends some minutes with a group of half a dozen pupils sitting around a table, while other pupils in that room proceed with their separate activities watched out of the corner of the teacher's eye."

The other continental practice advocated by Professor Prais is the appointment of class teachers for more than one year. While British primary teachers tend to swap classes each year, elsewhere in Europe it is accepted that it takes a term to get to know pupils individually, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and assess what motivates them. To minimise the time wasted, the class will keep the same teacher for up to four years.

Professor Prais acknowledges that British parents would be worried that their children would suffer from such long exposure to an inadequate teacher, but the benefits of continuity might outweigh the dangers. The organisers of the Gatsby Project stress that their scheme is still experimental and, even if successful, would take years to have an impact nationally. But they believe that a few fundamental and relatively inexpensive changes could improve primary schools in the long run.

Duplicated copies of Professor Prais's article cost £5 from the Publications Department, NIESR, 2 Dean Trench Street, London SW1P 3HE. The whole edition of the Economic Review is £25.

Gerry McCrum on the law of diminishing returns

Money isn't enough

show the difference in quality of schools that the average negro boy and the average white child are exposed to. You know yourself that the difference is going to be striking."

To almost universal surprise and in many instances profound despair, the differences in the schools attended

But the main thrust, that classmates matter most, is well within our own experience. Today the great majority of our A-level students are educated in neighbourhood comprehensives. Boys and girls living in areas with high property prices have an enhanced chance of affluent classmates. These neighbourhoods attract families willing to pay extra for a superior house, and the likelihood of affluent classmates for their children.

With no selection process in operation, other than the catchment area, the subtle characteristics that generate just happen to occur most frequently in schools with affluent pupils.

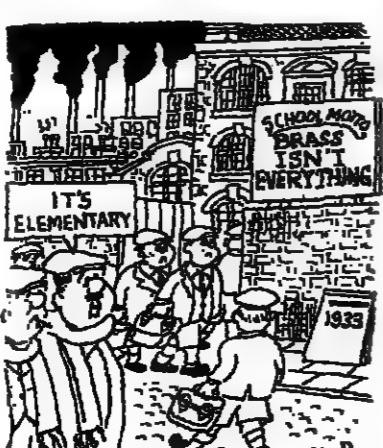
But what of boys and girls who do not live in affluent areas? Clearly for them the neighbourhood comprehensive may not be a good school. This "Coleman Effect" can be seen clearly in my own town, Oxford, and doubtless elsewhere in the UK.

The message of Coleman, however, is not of complete despair. According to Professor Christopher Jencks, an American sociologist, "if schools used their resources differently, additional resources might conceivably have large payoffs". Diminishing returns from additional resources is predicted only if a school continues its existing teaching strategy.

Would my Liverpool elementary school have been improved by a cash injection? Looking back, the outside toilets were certainly pathetic. But would we have swapped state-of-the-art toilets for some of the good things in life? For instance the 15-minute story reading at the end of school. I doubt it.

The report had a profound and continuing effect. To many it is a counsel of despair. It was badly received by liberal politicians, who hoped that the problems of the black under-class would be solved, at a stroke, with a massive injection of cash. It was badly received by the teaching profession.

• The author is Emeritus Fellow of Herford College, Quidford.



The report was prepared by Professor Coleman, a Johns Hopkins University sociologist. It was commissioned by the administration of President Johnson who required a survey "concerning the lack of availability of equal educational opportunities for individuals by reason of race, colour, religion or national origin".

The politicians anticipated a massive increase in educational funding for black children who, by and large, had their own schools. Coleman himself predicted that "The study will

be negligible. The considerable difference in average performance between black and white children was not caused by a difference in school expenditure.

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A cuckoo in the nest

Is business a respectable subject for universities?

decisions; they should be valued advisers to executives who know the company intimately. The idea of an industry-transfer market in top management is misguided.

The same problem afflicts the National Health Service today. Tough decisions about healthcare rationing — which have always been necessary — are no longer made by doctors but by remote administrators.

Management is not a subject where principles can be abstracted from the details of what a company does. The notion of an officer class of managers is uniformly disastrous for the only general principles that can be transmitted by teaching of this sort involve finance.

After the war a team of young business graduates in the Pentagon, innovators in applying statistics to military logistics, offered themselves as a management team to Ford. At that time the company was struggling to recover from 15 years of economic abolution. The new managers ended the chaos but they could understand only what was quantifiable — money.

The result was that they consistently underestimated so that, when the oil crunch came in the 1970s, Ford found itself lagging. Fortunately for Ford, what ultimately (and painfully) re-emerged were top men who understood money. But no one who starts life as a money man switches to become a car man.

Every large company needs financial experts. But they should not make the ultimate

on this world rather than the next. Knowledge was organised into categories taken from classical civilisation, taught in distinct "schools".

The Bachelor of Arts degree

comprised grammar, logic and rhetoric, and the Master of Arts music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy. Over centuries of scholarship these categories slowly slipped out of date. But today's subjects are their direct descendant and in this nest "management" is a cuckoo, an impostor.

Here is a quote from the Cambridge Institute of Management Studies' research prospectus on what some of its staff are studying: "determinants of quality strategy and the role of marketing in affecting the relationship between quality-related positional advantages and business performance". Another is "the conceptualisation of strategy and strategic change: the relationship between strategy and values and the role of culture and communication in the management of change".

Where are the vivid images

and concrete nouns? This is

abstract to the point where the eyes glaze over. More telling is the new jargon for a

personnel department — hu-

man resources. That is how

the Nazis regarded people.

Nobody who knew about automobile engineering or spent years haggling with customers in car showrooms could write like this. Our universities had it right when courses in management took place only as part of a degree in engineering. The year in industry in some MBA courses is a step in the right direction, but to go all the way is impossible because the business schools would have to abolish themselves.

Anthony Garrett

An officer class of managers is uniformly disastrous

A parent's life and hard times

Neil McIntosh opens the pages of his diary of the academic year

The story starts in July 1995, when I attend an open evening at my daughter's preferred sixth form, a consortium of four north London schools. She is insistent that she does not want to stay at her current independent girls school.

Academically, I am encouraged by the open evening, though I worry about the notion of 16-year-olds moving between three or four schools with large parts of each day entirely unstructured.

August: With summer holidays over, we suddenly realise that we have had no communication from the local primary school about our five-year-old son, apart from the one-paragraph letter confirming his place. What day does he start? What time? What other information should we have?

We phone, and according to the caretaker there will be no teachers in until next week and they will not be available that day because it is a "training day". I send a stiff letter saying we expect, on Monday, to be able to talk to the head, whose first full year will be.

September 4: Apologetic call from the head. How could we have slipped through the net? Next day the start of school. A bright, enthusiastic new teacher for the reception class. Altogether reassuring. On the other hand, no induction or induction materials.

September 12: Invitation from Judith (who she?) to a new parents' meeting at two days' notice. Which of us can/should drop everything?

October: The third start of the year as my 20-year-old firstborn heads off to read history at York. Not only a good university but, coincidentally, his parents' alma mater. The attractions of the place and the undergraduate life are obvious. Having enjoyed it to the full I feel guilty at my conclusion that it is indefensible for poorer taxpayers to be contributing to this privilege.

November: Will she, won't she — our three-year-old that is — get a place in the nursery at her brother's school? No one seems to know. Eventually the head assures my wife that notices will go out "in a few days". My wife walks back to our house and the letter offering a part-time place is on the doormat.

March: Sudden deterioration in the behaviour of our five-year-old. Why should a bright, unusual

ally academic boy who is very fond of his teacher suddenly give her a hard time? The teacher wonders if it is something at home. We worry about modern classroom environments which are, of course, less formal and somewhat noisier than we have been used to.

April: We attend a parents' evening as part of the Ofsted inspection of the school. About 40 parents generally, and rightly, supportive of the school but with quite widespread concern about under-achievement.

I receive a letter from York. My son wants to leave to train to be an actor. Somewhat depressed, I get in touch. This summer term, he tells me, he receives 3.25 hours teaching per week.

May: We spend an hour with the nursery teacher. A full-time place is, almost certainly, available next term. The nursery teacher is, as ever, helpful and thorough. However she won't be doing an assembly with the children this term because she, and others, are too exhausted by the Ofsted inspection.

My wife is bemused. I, running a company which has managed more than 600 school inspections, shrug my shoulders. I find the inability of teachers to undergo inspection without suffering hypertension quite bizarre but I know it is a fact and that a major change in culture and attitude is needed from the profession as a whole.

July: Now 17, my older daughter, is working in a restaurant for the last two weeks of term. This is supposedly work experience. In fact she has plenty such experience and, in effect, the term has simply ended two weeks early and she is earning money for the summer.

I do not mind her doing this, but it does confirm some of my worries about the consortium's hands-off management of sixth formers.

The primary school sports day is a woefully disorganised mêlée of non-competitive activities in the hard playground, though there is a park close by. The afternoon makes me reflect on what is wrong with education. What makes the liberal Left equally disorganized and inefficient with caring? The lack of structure gave the teachers a gruellingly stressful afternoon.

July 19: Term ends. We have received no formal notification that a full-time nursery place is available.

Sports day showed all that was wrong with education

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GOLF

Smethurst is surprise package at Portrush

By MEL WEBB

FOR a long time yesterday, the first round of the Senior British Open, at Royal Portrush looked like living proof of the contention that, in any race, the thoroughbreds will prevail. Then, all of a sudden, along came a man with hardly any pedigree at all and effortlessly joined the leading group.

The expected names — Neil Coles, Malcolm Gregson, Bob Charles, Tom Wargo and Tommy Horton — were on the leaderboard; Coles and Gregson on 67, five under par, the rest a shot behind. Then came Roy Smethurst, an amateur golfer, to upset the applecart and scatter the grade A fruit hit-and-yon.

Smethurst, 54, last month, had a 67 to tie for the lead, then told the story of the round of his life. A former England youth international and a scratch player for 35 years, he had birdies on each of the first three holes, dropped a shot on the 8th, and further birdies on the 13th, 14th, 16th and 17th put him into a one-shot lead. He then three-putted the last from 60 feet to deny the romantics in the crowd a yarn to take home with them.

He hardly had the right sort of preparation to come into this championship — he had played only about ten medal rounds this year before taking on the might of the Dunluce links. "I only have so many holidays a year," he said. "I'm a true amateur." There was nothing very amateur about the way he finished the day ahead of such luminaries as Charles, Gary Player and Brian Barnes, the defending champion.

Earlier, Barnes had the detached air of a man who wished he was somewhere else. He forfeited the chance of playing in a tournament worth \$1.1 million (about £735,000) to play at Portrush.

but probably would have preferred to rest. Barnes is playing in his fourth major championship in as many weeks. He tied for fourth place in the US Senior Open, finished third in the Ford Senior Players' Championship and then played four rounds in the Open Championship at Royal Lytham last week. He was, he said, "exhausted".

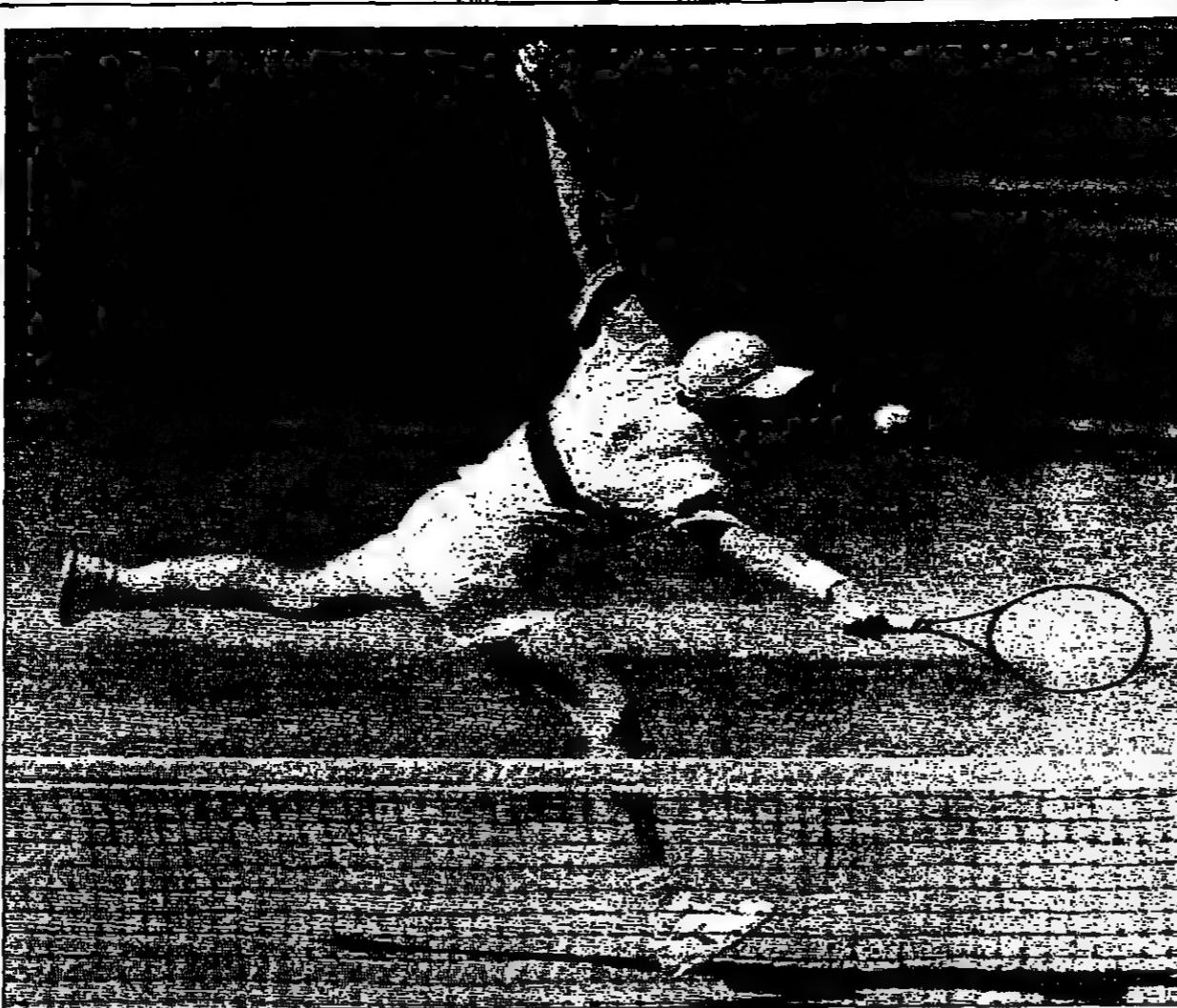
If he had been offered a lift somewhere around the turn, he looked as if he would have accepted it; a couple of hours after his level-par round of 72, he was talking about transport matters.

"If you want to get more Americans to play in this, you are going to have to get carts," he said. "They are available on the senior tour in the States for anybody who wants them and, although I always walk the course, there are many players who use them to have a short rest and a sit-down between shots." It was just as well that there were no members of the Royal and Ancient around; certain of them would either have expired quietly in the corner, while others would have accused Barnes of some sort of heresy.

Earlier, Wargo, who had won in considerable style at Lytham in 1994, revealed an unusual sponsorship. Professional golfers are used to being given cars, others have clothing contracts, practically all of them have some sort of deal for clubs. But cigars? This is something new.

Wargo and Larry Loretta, another notorious puffer of fat stogies, have small deals with a Mexican firm of cigar manufacturers to smoke Teamos, a well-known brand in the United States.

Wargo had one and a half yesterday, he admitted. "It would have been two, but the rain got the second one," he said.



Jeffrey Hunter stretches for a back-hand volley for Surrey in their match against Devon in the county championship at Eastbourne yesterday (Alix Ramsay writes). Hunter and Danny Sapsford beat Daniel Ahi and Gary Drake 7-5, 6-3 reviving memories of the days when Hunter was one of the most promising young players in British tennis.

The relegation and championship battles come to a head now and in the round-robin format with the total number of matches, rubbers and sets taken into account, it can require a calculator to work out who will be back at Eastbourne next year.

Surrey are favourites to win the title, having already beaten the only other real contenders, Hampshire and the

Isle of Wight, on Wednesday. That is, of course, if everyone has got their maths right. Around this time during County Week, it is easy to spot the team captains. They are the men and women by the side of the court ageing visibly. The relegation and championship battles come to a head now and in the round-robin format with the total number of matches, rubbers and sets taken into account, it can require a calculator to work out who will be back at Eastbourne next year.

Warwickshire's women's team kept the tension going long into the afternoon. They were playing Surrey,

Photograph: Hugh Routledge

RUGBY UNION: CENTRE MAY NOT BE FIT FOR FINAL GAME IN SOUTH AFRICA

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

TIM HORAN, the Australia centre, will miss the tri-nation international against New Zealand in Brisbane tomorrow after breaking his nose in training. He will be replaced by Richard Tombs.

A decision on whether to take Horan or South Africa for next month's final round of tri-national matches will be made

at the weekend. Australia suffered another blow when Dan Crowley, the prop, withdrew from Saturday's game with a broken toe. He will be replaced by Richard Harry.

Australia were beaten 43-6 by the All Blacks in the opening tri-national fixture in Wellington on July 6. New Zealand, who lead the southern hemisphere competition

with nine points from two games, will clinch the inaugural tri-nations title if they win.

English rugby officials will attend another emergency meeting next Wednesday in an attempt to close the gap between them and their European partners over the controversial £87.5 million BSkyB television deal. On Wednesday, the full five nations' committee — including

France — held a meeting in London and again said the onus was on the English to find a settlement.

Gloucester rugby officials have accused the Rugby Football Union (RFU) of "steamroller" tactics after being forced to cancel a match with Western Samoa on November 22 as the RFU have added three more divisional games to the Samoans' tour itinerary.

Horan and Crowley miss All Blacks clash

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

ADRIAN GRANT rescued England again yesterday by winding the decimating third string rubber of their world junior men's team squash championship semi-final with Pakistan in Cairo (Colin McQuillan writes).

Grant overcame Kashif Shuja 9-7, 1-0, 9-0, 9-7 to earn England an unexpected place in the final. "For a 15-year-old, he took the pressure so well," David Pearson, the England coach, said.

Earlier, John Russell had surrendered a 5-3 lead in his opening game against Ajaz Asmat before slipping to a 5-9, 4-9, 2-9 defeat. It took a determined 7-9, 9-5, 9-7, 9-4 first-string win over Amjad Khan from Lee Beachill of Barnsley, to put England back into the match.

Smyth's sweep

Golf: Des Smyth of Ireland,

conquered unseasonal cold and cloudy weather to establish a first-round lead in the Dutch Open at Hilversum yesterday. Smyth, who uses a broomhandle putter, shot a seven-under-par round of 64 that included seven birdies. He has a one-stroke lead over his countryman, David Feherty, also using a broomhandled putter, and Jean Van de Velde, of France.

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RACING

Injury rules Roberts out of Goodwood

By JULIAN MUSCAT

IT HAS been an unhappy 24 hours for Michael Roberts. The jockey learnt on Wednesday that he would not, after all, ride Pentire in the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes at Ascot tomorrow. But worse was to follow when Roberts fractured his left wrist in a fall at Sandown yesterday.

The South African, expected to be out for three weeks, was unseated from Honeyshan as he pulled up the filly after the Heathrow Maiden Stakes. The timing of the injury is cruel. It came just as Roberts was re-establishing himself after a late start to the British season. He is to miss Glorious Goodwood but hopes to return for the Ebor meeting at York.

The King George field was further depleted yesterday when Singpiel was ruled out of the contest with an abscess in his near foreleg. Anthony Stroud, racing manager to the colt's owner, Sheikh Mohamed, said the colt is expected to be back in tack next week. But the sheikh may yet be represented tomorrow by Swain, whose participation has been jeopardised by the prevailing fast ground.

On leaving Sandown, Stroud headed straight for Ascot to assess the state of the track. "Swain worked very well earlier in the week and we are keen to run," Stroud said. However, after walking the course, Stroud decided to announce a decision until he had contacted the colt's trainer, André Fabre.

In an age when just about every two-year-old winner is hyped beyond reason, a

strange silence greeted Red Camellia after the filly had impressively lowered the track record in the Milcars Star Stakes at Sandown yesterday.

Red Camellia would have had bookmakers reaching frantically for their mobile telephones had she hailed from one of the big Newmarket stables. Although the graduate from Sir Mark Prescott's yard failed to earn a 1,000 Guineas' quote, she may well force herself into the public eye in the Candelabra Stakes at Goodwood next month.

Opposed by six fillies, all previous winners, Red Camellia assumed command from the outset and never looked vulnerable to the challenge of Yashmak, the hot favourite. Further improvement should be forthcoming, and her paddock appearance suggested she has yet to fill her frame.

Prescott has demonstrated that he can mix it with the best of them. He produced Pivotal after a lengthy absence to win the King's Stand Stakes, and he almost conjured a stunning upset when Last Second harried Shake The Yoke home in the Coronation Stakes.

Doubtless the muted reception for Red Camellia had much to do with the trainer's well-documented inclination towards pessimism. "Mine have been beaten; there was a group one filly in the race," he said.

Cheveley Park Stud, which owns Red Camellia, will not be impatient to find out. The Newmarket-based nursery also campaigns Dazzle, who dominates the betting for next season's 1,000 Guineas.



Quinn guides Red Camellia to an emphatic victory in the Milcars Star Stakes at Sandown yesterday

ASCOT

BBC2

2.15: The betting may offer the best guide. Mystic, Sleepless and Summerosa hold entries in the Cheveley Park Stakes and/or Lowther Stakes, and almost conjured a stunning upset when Last Second harried Shake The Yoke home in the Coronation Stakes.

State Theatre and The Lad should improve over this trip, along with Esterby Park, who makes a quick reappearance after running High-flying to a head at Ripon on Saturday. That was over 12 furlongs and Mark Johnston's progressive three-year-old should be even better over this stiff two miles.

2.45: Argyle Cavalier has not raced for 402 days but Pat Eddery is an interesting booking for the six-year-old, who is well handicapped on his best form. Hattaafah,

TODAY'S RACES
ON TELEVISION

State Theatre and The Lad last Saturday and has only a 3lb penalty. The useful David Griffin is value for his 5lb claim. Double Quick has yet to reproduce last season's form, on which she is potentially well treated. Bolish, who did not enjoy the run of the race behind Tedburrow last time, looks a bigger danger.

3.15: Sylvia Paradise has only a 3lb penalty for his easy 3½-length success at Yarmouth on Tuesday and Clive Brittain's Stewards' Cup hope is sure to give a good account. Despite stepping back a furlong, he showed his effectiveness at the minimum trip behind Midnight Escape here last month.

Freeliere did well to finish third behind Freedom Flame at Newmarket after a nine-week lay-off and may improve, but has not always jockeyed the easiest of rides. Le Teteau improved when winning at Haydock last time, but that was over a mile on easier ground. In the circumstances, the lightly raced Oops Petie is the choice. She is open to further improvement after a comfortable success at Chepstow.

RICHARD EVANS

3.40 DUNNINGTON CONDITIONS STAKES

(2-Y-O: 24, 502, 70) (6)

1 UNION TOWNS 9 (D) M Preston 0-13... 6 Doffield 3
2 JUB JAB 10 (D) Nichols 0-11... 5 Mrs Evans 1
3 HSU HARRIER 23 (J) D O'Brien 0-10... 7 J Weaver 4
4 SWEETIE 10 (D) G Doherty 0-10... 5 Mrs Evans 1
5 NOSTALGIA 19 (7) R Phipps 0-10... 6 Doffield 3
6 AVARILIA 29 (D) W M Tabor 0-10... 4 M McKeon 2

7 4-H Hatter, 3-1 Union Town, 8-2 Hostile As, 8-1 8th Job, 8-1 Majestic Horse, Armento.
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CRICKET: PAKISTAN RESCUED BY MAGNIFICENT INNINGS OF POWER AND PRECISION

Lord's rises to acclaim Inzamam

Simon Wilde watches a batsman blossom at the Mecca of cricket

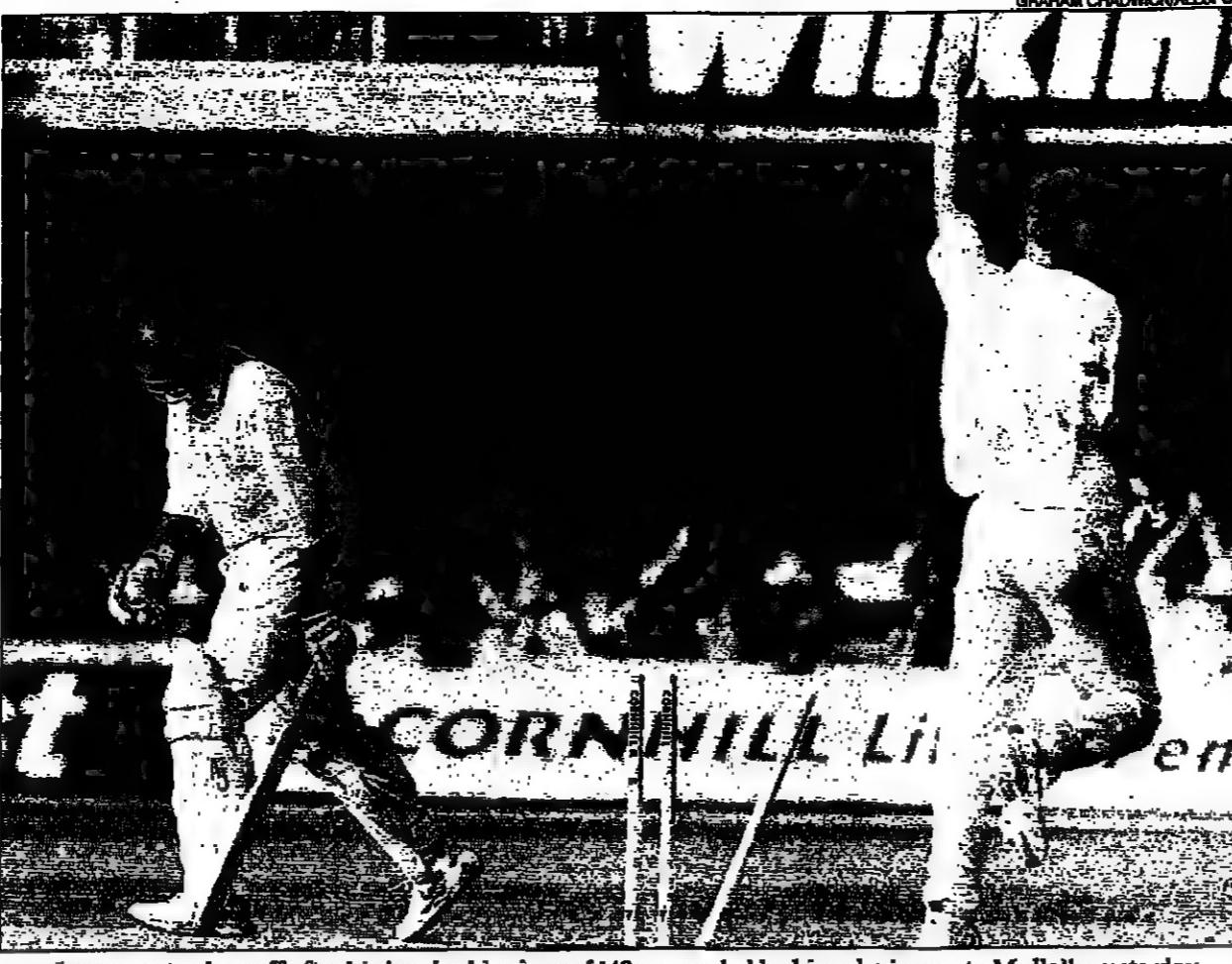
INZAMAM-UL-HAQ is not the first overseas cricketer to come to Lord's and do justice to his talent, and he will not be the last. That every visiting team dreams of performing well there does not make life easy for England, whose players are obliged to play on the hallowed turf when the house is less than full and the atmosphere eerily subdued.

Inzamam came to cricket's Mecca to score a hundred and that is precisely what he did, shortly after 4pm. He showed his pride by punching the air and then, with the gentlest of touches, kissing his bat.

As a celebration, it echoed Michael Slater pressing his lips to his Australia badge three years ago and revealed the more sensible side of a man who moments earlier had lifted his score from 94 to 100 by clubbing Hick for six over-long.

"I was glad a spinner was on," Inzamam said later. "because I had thought about getting to my hundred with a six. Fortunately, it was a good ball to hit. It's an honour to make a century at Lord's."

He took his first Test century off West Indies in Antigua



Inzamam trudges off after his inspired innings of 148 was ended by him playing on to Mullally yesterday

Inzamam capped his performance by going on to 148, the highest of his five Test centuries, before driving loosely at Mullally and dragging the ball into his stumps as he approached a fourth hour at the crease. He had played strokes all round the wicket and walked off to a whole-hearted standing ovation as anyone can have received from a Lord's crowd in recent years.

Having come in with Pakistan in trouble at 12 for two, Inzamam's performance was a thoroughly mature one and highlighted how far he has travelled since he burst onto the international stage during the World Cup in 1992. There, he pulled his side out of the fire in their semi-final against New Zealand with an extraordinary display of hitting.

Great things were then predicted for him but he did not settle quickly to Test cricket. In his first series, in England a few months later, he averaged 13, with his least productive match at Lord's.

"I was glad a spinner was on," Inzamam said later. "because I had thought about getting to my hundred with a six. Fortunately, it was a good ball to hit. It's an honour to make a century at Lord's."

ago, puts Inzamam's latest development down to improved fitness. "He has lost a lot of weight since the World Cup earlier this year and has greater mobility than he used to," Hanif said yesterday.

"He is moving around the crease better and runs between the wickets more quickly than he used to, even though he still experiences

trouble with his left knee. He possesses a special talent."

England clearly had a plan for curb Inzamam's penchant for driving. Atherton greeted him with close catchers on both sides of the wicket, but it did not work. Inzamam bided his time, worked the ball into the gaps and by the time he resumed occupation after lunch, the field had dropped

back. He has also enhanced his range of strokes. Once predominantly an on-side player, he now exhibits some glorious cover drives. However much Inzamam trains, though, he will never be anything other than a heavyweight. But even if he is unable to float like a butterfly, he can certainly sting like a bee.

Windows rises to the occasion

By JACK BAILEY

CHELTENHAM (first day of four; Gloucestershire won toss; Gloucestershire have scored 331 for three wickets against Warwickshire)

AS NEAR a perfect day as you could wish for: the glorious setting of the College Ground, a pitch made for batting, once the first anxious moments had been survived, and innings made for surviving, and the more anxious moments of those in search of that elusive item — a proper day's cricket.

For Gloucestershire, lan-

guishing at the foot of the championship table, it was a good toss to win and an encouraging day all round. Windows made the first championship century of his career and looked good for many more.

Yesterday, he came close to disaster early on without giving a chance. Otherwise, his was a masterly display: 11 fours in his first 50 testified to the power of his strokes as well as to the speed of the out-field. There were 19 fours, chiefly to the off side, in his century, which came after nearly four hours. He was nearly run out on 85. In fact, Harold Bird gave him out, only to realise the bats had not removed the balls.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This week I want to discuss the auction after a take-out double and the initial response. If the doubler is minimum, say 125 HCP, he will pass a simple response. If the doubler bids again after a simple response he shows significant extra values: there is rarely any need to jump around. Let's look at a couple of hands after the auction 1♦—Double—Pass—1♦—Pass:

(1) ♠AK5
♦KQ5
♥A785
♣QJ84

On hand (i) you should make a simple rebid of One No-trump. To overall One No-trump would have shown 16-18; therefore to double first shows a little more, say 19-21. That is quite enough on this hand: remember partner would have jumped the bidding on many hands with seven or more points and four or more spades. On hand (ii) rebid Two Clubs. It would be a mistake to raise spades immediately with only three-card support, as partner is expecting you to have the suit already. There is no reason to jump just because you have 20 points. Partner might have either of the following hands:

(II) ♠642
♦W742
♥K5
♣K32

Hand (i) has a working 5 HCP and a possible ruffing value, quite a suitable hand, but still eleven tricks is a lot to make; a quiet Three Clubs is best. If the doubler makes another move, hand (ii) will bid game. With hand (iv) you have hearts very well guarded, plus a useful queen of clubs, which should make Three No-trumps a good contract, so that's what you should bid over Two Clubs — if you had any more you would have bid either One No-trump or Two Spades on the previous round.

(M) ♠AK5
♦K6
♥A743
♣A854

Hand (v) is an example of what you need to raise partner's One Spade response to Two Spades — remember he could have a Yarborough. Hand (vi) is very powerful and worth a jump to Three Clubs. This is not forcing but shows the values for an opening Acol Two bid.

EUROPEAN YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS: Juniors' Standings (after 15 rounds): 1 Norway 305pts, 2 Denmark 300, 3 Russia 262.5, 4 Israel 272.5, Sweden 261; 6, Poland 251.5, 7, Iceland 250; 8, Hungary 245; 9, Germany 242, 10, Lithuania 240.5; 21, Great Britain 199. Schools' Standings (after five rounds): 1, Germany 103, 2, Israel 67, 3, Poland 65, 4, France 84, 5, Denmark 83; 9, Great Britain 77

□ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

PRICKET
a. deer
b. A thorn hedge
c. A concealed dagger

FIVE-EIGHTH
a. An oarsman
b. A rugby player
c. A kilometre

PARR
a. A young salmon
b. Scratch
c. An old man

BULLY OFF
a. The red card
b. Army short rations
c. Hockey start

Answers on page 42

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Anand revived

After losing the PCA world championship match to Garry Kasparov in New York last year, some of the vitality seemed to drain away from the play of Viswanathan Anand, the Indian grandmaster. However, after almost a year, his fortunes have revived. For his shared first title with Vladimir Kramnik, the Russian grandmaster, in Dernbach, Anand reverted to a vigorous style.

The pick of these innings was that played by Robin Smith. After two unintentional fours through the slips soon after he had come in, he was soon crashing the ball around.

Stephenson's 61 included 11 fours; James, who until recently



He is still quite capable of dominating a session or two, as those Worcestershire bowlers who had the bad luck to bowl at him in the second round of the NatWest Trophy will testify. No other batsman will testify, but Smith's was of a higher order. His 54 came off 74 balls and included a six and seven fours.

It was a surprise when he was out, taken at the wicket off one Hollioake moved away sufficiently to take the edge.

Surrey fielded with the same application as they bowled, running out Keesh as he and Terry went for a rather cheeky fourth run, not overriding the clamour in the field and looking what they are, a county challenging for the championship.

Whitaker's resolve rallies quest for title

By IVO TENNANT

JAMES WHITAKER typified the determination under-scoring Leicestershire's quest for their first championship since 1975 on a testing day for the second-placed side at Grace Road yesterday.

Sussex fielded an all-seam attack in the absence of Ian Salisbury and were rewarded when they reduced Leicestershire to 177 for seven with Whitaker retired hurt and apparently out of the match with a torn calf muscle.

That was the cue for Paul Nixon, the wicketkeeper, to reach double figures for the first time in a home championship match this season.

When the ninth wicket fell, Whitaker hobbled back into the action and, at the close, the partnership was worth a further 33 runs. Although Whitaker will bat on today, the injury will keep him out for at least two weeks.

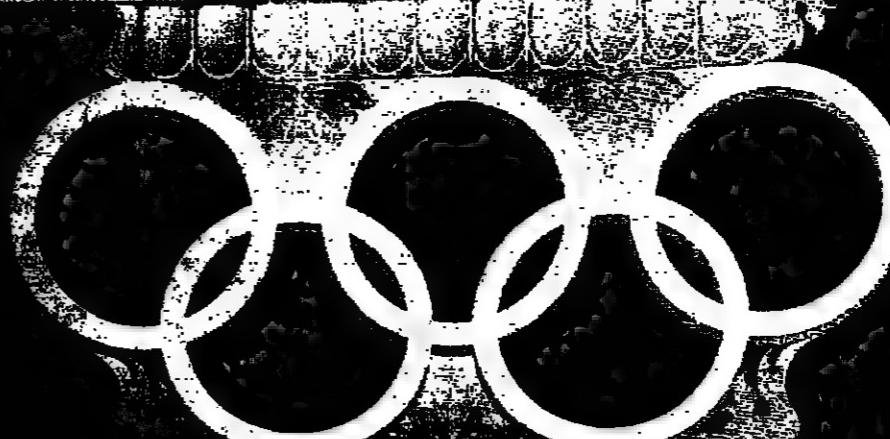
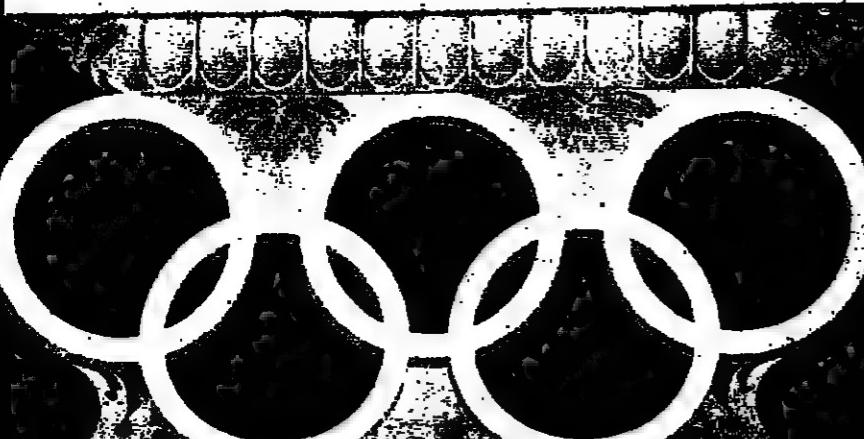
Matthew Maynard, of Glamorgan, was another captain leading by example, although his efforts, against Lancashire in Malmo, Korchon went on to win the Politiken Cup in Copenhagen.

LEADING SCORES: Korchon 87.11

Stephenson 100. Hodson 8.

Smith 86. Jones 85. Stephenson 84. James 83. Nixon 82. Hodson 81. Whitaker 79. Anand 78. Kramnik 77. Salim 76. Tait 75. Llewellyn 74. Morris 73. Gash 72. Gash 71. Gash 70. Gash 69. Gash 68. Gash 67. Gash 66. Gash 65. Gash 64. Gash 63. Gash 62. Gash 61. Gash 60. Gash 59. Gash 58. Gash 57. Gash 56. Gash 55. Gash 54. Gash 53. Gash 52. Gash 51. Gash 50. Gash 49. Gash 48. Gash 47. Gash 46. Gash 45. Gash 44. Gash 43. Gash 42. Gash 41. Gash 40. Gash 39. Gash 38. Gash 37. Gash 36. Gash 35. Gash 34. Gash 33. Gash 32. Gash 31. Gash 30. Gash 29. Gash 28. Gash 27. Gash 26. Gash 25. Gash 24. Gash 23. Gash 22. Gash 21. Gash 20. Gash 19. Gash 18. Gash 17. Gash 16. Gash 15. Gash 14. Gash 13. Gash 12. Gash 11. Gash 10. Gash 9. Gash 8. Gash 7. Gash 6. Gash 5. Gash 4. Gash 3. Gash 2. Gash 1. Gash 0. Hodson 79. Hodson 78. Hodson 77. Hodson 76. Hodson 75. Hodson 74. Hodson 73. Hodson 72. Hodson 71. Hodson 70. Hodson 69. Hodson 68. Hodson 67. Hodson 66. Hodson 65. Hodson 64. Hodson 63. Hodson 62. 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ATLANTA 96: THE COMPLETE GUIDE



Mary Slaney, whose tangle with Zola Budd in 1984 was the most dramatic story of those Olympics, appears in the 5,000 metres this evening. Aged 37, with her Los Angeles team a long time dry, Slaney is a member of the Olympic team for the fourth time, but her first for eight years. She has managed to put the Budd incident, in which America's darling of middle-distance running was brought to earth during the 3,000 metres, behind her, but memories came flooding back as she emerged to challenge again for the United States' squad. "I rarely think about '84, but, in the last six weeks, I have seen and heard more about it than I have for the past ten years," Slaney said. "It has been put out in front me, as if to say: 'Don't forget it.'" The most notable Olympic feller since Slaney was Gail Devers, who crashed at the final flight of the 1992 100 metres hurdles in Barcelona, when leading. Ironically, both women stumbled in the Olympic trials this year but stayed up this time. DP

The French synchronised swimming team is proving the most controversial of almost any at the Games. Originally they were planning a routine, with the swimmers grimly manoeuvring round the pool, based on re-creating elements of the Holocaust. This provoked outrage, not only in France, where the subject touches a particular raw nerve (as it was an occupied country), but also across the world. The squad protested that their routine for Atlanta was designed to renew attention on one of humanity's greatest crimes. Eventually Guy Cout, the French Minister of Sport and Olympic 110 metres hurdles champion in 1976, banned the routine. The French squad reacted by closing their practices to the media. Although they have not announced their substitute choice, it is understood that on August 2 their routine will be a re-enactment of General Sherman's notorious march through Georgia in the American Civil War, which devastated large areas of the state in which the Olympics are being staged. JG

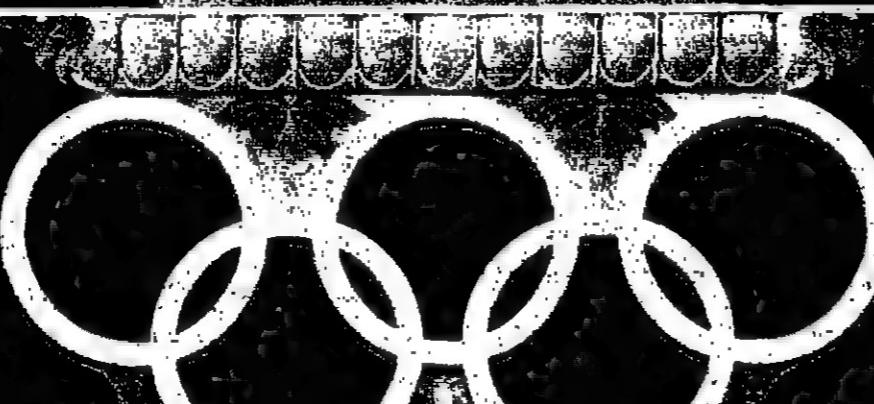
HOT SPOT

Four years ago, Linford Christie won the gold medal in the 100 metres. These are certain to be Christie's last big championships and, although his performances this season have been lacklustre, it would be foolish to write him off. He has a habit of rising to the occasion and will relish the chance of beating the Americans on their home territory. He begins the defence of his title today.

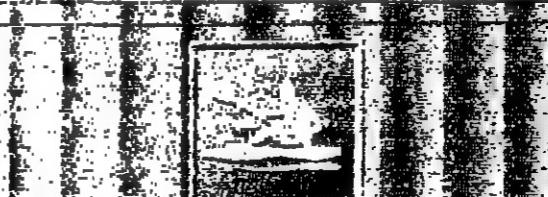
TV: BBC1: from 4pm.

The gold medal in the ray-of-sunshine stakes must go to Amanda Beard, at 14 years old the youngest member of the United States team. Winner of silver medals in the 100 and 200 metres breaststroke, Beard learned that her pet rabbit had given birth. "I'm gonna call one of them 'Silver,'" it's the only colour I know," joked the schoolgirl, who later won a gold in the 4x100 metres medley and who donates \$1 out of her \$6-a-week pocket money to animal welfare. Her parents were even forced to bring her teddy bear to the lanes. A soft target for one hard-bitten hackett who was bent on asking questions about drugs? Apparently not. Beard's comments were perhaps the most mature so far heard at the Games: "I never thought about doing drugs; I am doing fine right now and I think you feel a lot better about yourself when you touch the wall and you know it was you and not something inside you. Some substance, I think you earn it more if it comes from the heart and the hard work."

CL



Security at the Olympic yachting venue is probably as tight as anywhere at these most security-conscious Games. The sailors are brought in by bus every day from the Olympic village to Savannah to the venue management site, with three police cars travelling in front and behind them. To get into the site itself, they then go through a highly-sensitive metal detector. A nickel in your pocket will start it off, as will a signet ring and even a metal-dipped leather belt. One member of the Australian team—not a sailor, but part of the back-up staff—got so fed up trying to get through it that, despite the presence of female security guards and doors of others waiting to get in, he stripped off completely and still managed to get it off. Meanwhile, the daily thunderstorms have left the competitions with not much to do cut on the day-marks for hours at a time. The inventive Greek team have made makeshift fishing nets to catch crabs and are now running regular afternoon races between the creatures. EG



All the Olympic horror stories of missed buses and poor communications have been lost on the canoeists, who have been living an idyllic existence up by the Ocoee River, about two hours north of Atlanta. Lynn Simpson, the world slalom champion and favourite for gold, has a training run this morning when all the competitors have a chance to test the 25-gate slalom course prior to the start of competition tomorrow. The Ocoee has 288,000 cubic feet of water flowing down its course on an average three-minute run, enough to flood a football pitch to the depth of six feet. The course is regarded as one of the most impressive facilities in the Games. On the sidelines, the competing community is a mix-and-match. It will be a host of split jerseys. Michael Scherzer of Germany, is the team of Austria and individual coach to two members of the German team, while one of Simpson's most experienced rivals will be Myriam Fox-Jerusalami, wife of the former British world champion, Richard Fox. AL

Reports: David Powell, John Stockdale

MEDAL TABLES

	Gold	Silver	Bronze		Gold	Silver	Bronze
Russia	11	7	5	Costa Rica	1	0	0
United States	10	14	4	Kazakhstan	1	0	0
France	6	9	7	Germany	0	8	8
China	5	6	6	Belarus	0	3	2
Poland	5	2	2	Greece	0	2	0
Italy	3	4	4	Bulgaria	0	1	4
Cuba	3	4	2	Brazil	0	1	2
South Korea	3	3	2	Canada	0	1	2
Australia	3	2	5	North Korea	0	1	1
Turkey	3	0	1	Spain	0	1	1
Ireland	3	0	0	Sweden	0	1	1
Japan	2	2	1	Austria	0	1	0
Belgium	2	1	2	Uzbekistan	0	1	0
New Zealand	2	0	1	Great Britain	0	1	0
South Africa	2	0	1	Finland	0	1	0
Hungary	1	2	5	Holland	0	0	4
Ukraine	1	0	2	Georgia	0	0	1
Romania	1	0	1	Moldavia	0	0	1
Yugoslavia	1	0	1				
Armenia	1	0	0				

At end of Wednesday's events

ATLANTA, TODAY

Weather: sunny Humidity: 85% Temperature: 75F

Reports: Craig Lord, Edward Glaman, Andria Tait

TODAY AT THE GAMES

All times BST

ATHLETICS: 20m walk (13.00); men's high jump, qualifying (14.00); women's 100m, first round (15.00); men's shot, qualifying (15.05); men's 100m, first round (16.00); women's 400m, first round (17.00); women's javelin, qualifying (21.30 and 23.00); women's 800m heats (22.00); women's 100m, second round (23.05); men's triple jump, qualifying (23.10); men's 100m, second round (23.35); men's 400m, first round (00.00); women's 5,000m, heats (00.50); men's shot, final (01.00); men's 10,000m, heats (02.15).

BADMINTON: Men's singles, third round (14.00 and 19.00); women's singles, second (14.00) and third (19.00 and 01.00) rounds; mixed doubles, first round (01.00).

BASKETBALL: Men's preliminary round: Pool A: Angola

v Lithuania (17.00); Argentina v Croatia (01.00); United States v China (03.00); Pool B: Puerto Rico v Australia (15.00); South Korea v Greece (20.00); Brazil v Yugoslavia (22.00). BEACH VOLLEYBALL: Men's and women's (15.00 and 19.30). BOXING: Light-flyweight, lightweight and middleweight, second round (16.30 and 01.00). CYCLING: Men: Team pursuit, qualifying (13.30) and quarter-finals (16.50); sprint, third round (15.45) and repechages (16.30). Women: Sprint, quarter-finals (15.30) and semi-finals (17.20); individual pursuit, quarter-finals (16.55). DIVING: Women's platform, preliminaries (20.00). EQUESTRIANISM: Three-day event: individual jumping (final discipline, 16.00). HANDBALL: Women's preliminary round: Pool A: Hungary v China (15.00); Denmark v United States (23.30); China v Taiwan (02.00).

(19.30); Pool B: Norway v Angola (17.00); South Korea v Germany (21.30). HOCKEY: Men's preliminary round: Pool A: Germany v Argentina (14.00); Pakistan v India (22.30); Spain v United States (01.00). Women's round-robin: United States v Germany (22.30); Australia v Great Britain (01.00). JUDO: Men's under 60kg and women's under 48kg, preliminaries (14.30) and (30); final (20.00). ROWING: Men: Semi-finals: Lightweight double sculls (14.00); lightweight coxed fours (14.40); quadruple sculls (14.50); Women: Semi-finals: Lightweight double sculls (14.20). SHOOTING: Men: 10-metre running target, preliminaries (14.00); final (15.30); skeet, preliminaries (13.30); rapid fire qualifying (15.00) and precision final (17.00). SOFTBALL: Round-robin: Japan v Puerto Rico (14.00); United States v Australia (16.30); Canada v Holland (23.30); China v Taiwan (02.00).

SWIMMING: Heats at 15.05 for evening finals. Finals: Men: 200m backstroke (00.55); 1,500m freestyle (01.45); 4x100m medley relay (02.20). Women: 200m butterfly (00.33); 50m freestyle (01.18). TABLE TENNIS: Men's singles, round-robin (15.00) and (01.00); women's singles, round-robin (15.00); women's doubles, quarter-finals (10.00). TENNIS: Men's and women's singles, second round and men's and women's doubles, first round (16.00). VOLLEYBALL: Men: Pool A: Germany v Turkey (17.00); Pool B: South Korea (17.30); China v Ukraine (21.00); United States v Japan (00.30). Pool B: Russia v Peru (15.00); Germany v Cuba (23.30); Canada v Brazil (03.00). WATER POLO: Quarter-finals (20.00, 21.40, 23.20 and 03.00). WEIGHTLIFTING: Under 83kg: Group B (17.30); and group A final (21.00). YACHTING: Two races to be sailed in each class: men's and women's Mistral, Soling, Tempest (18.00).

WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION

BBC1

7.0-9.0am Olympic Breakfast, 9.05em-12.35pm Olympic Grandstand, 1.40-5.25pm Olympic Grandstand (when live from London), 7.0-8.30pm The Essential Olympics, 10.15pm-4.25am Olympic Grandstand.

BBC2

5.55-7.0pm Olympic Grandstand (after close of play at London), 8.30-10.15pm Olympic Grandstand, 12.0-2.0em Olympic Grandstand.

Eurosport

24-hour coverage

Panasonic

Official Worldwide Sponsor
1996 Olympic Games



Australian
in Star class

Finnish

Great Britain
Star

Boat

THE

YACHTING

THE

Conclusive proof or another ripping yarn?

Technically, I suppose, it must be possible to make a bad documentary about Jack the Ripper, but hard as I try, I don't think I can remember one. Every couple of years or so I sit in front of the television as the latest theory is advanced, and every couple of years I find myself mouthing the same sequence of words: "Yes, really? Who? Well, I never." Then I don't give it another thought... until next time.

So by next week I shall have probably forgotten that Jack the Ripper was in fact... Francis Tumblety, an Irish American quack doctor with a notorious hatred of women — particularly the full variety. It was at about this point in last night's *Secret History: The Whitechapel Murders* (Channel 4) that I found myself mouthing: "Really?"

I'd already done the "yes" bit. For a programme that promised "to cut through the fiction to the

forensic facts", it took its time. We had a review of the appalling social conditions in the East End of the 1880s, we had a discussion about the power of the newly burgeoning press and, of course, we had the standard recreations down foggy, dark alleys. Yes, yes, I shoule... get on with it. They did.

Quickly and efficiently, David Jessel outlined the latest for of evidence for a post-dated prosecution. The murders began when Tumblety arrived in London and stopped when he departed. An East End landlady found a blood-soaked shirt in a room she had recently let to an American gentleman. His hatred of women was such that his most prized possession back home — and I'm afraid this is where it gets nasty — was a collection of boiled womb. Most of the Ripper's victims, you may recall, had their uterus removed.

There was other stuff as well, which in the best traditions of a

case that has now lasted 108 years, quickly proved too complicated to remember. There was a suitcase with "obscene material" in it, there were arrests for gross indecency. It all seemed pretty damning, conclusive stuff. But it always does.

So why hadn't anyone done anything about this Tumblety before? Well, it turned out they had — in spades. What sparked the programme — and the book that it was clearly drawn from — was the discovery of an apparently authentic letter written by a J.G. Littlechild of Scotland Yard. Writing some 25 years after the murders, Littlechild alleged that Tumblety had been the chief suspect. So why no fuss in the burgeoning press that we had heard so much about?

Why indeed? The letter was acquired by Stewart Evans, a full-time Suffolk police constable and part-time Ripper expert. Together

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

with a colleague he discovered that, unlike their British counterparts, the American newspapers had been full of stories linking Tumblety to the Whitechapel murders — he had the cuttings to prove it. As Evans put it: "He was there on every page." Why had the British press not picked up these reports? Why did Scotland Yard not pursue the inquiries it initiated in America? I'm afraid I haven't a

clue and nor, it seems, has anybody else. The Scotland Yard file on Tumblety is... missing. Well, I never. Next.

My own investigation into Ian Partison has so far unearthed just two facts. First, that the writer/adaptor of *Rab C. Nesbit, Para Handy, Bad Boys* and now *Aleutico Parick* (BBC2) is definitely the man that Scottish actors most want to meet. And second, that his own comedies normally take a bit of getting used to. If you're still muttering "disgusting" by episode three... well, there's always *Para Handy*.

Alberto Parick, which we first saw last summer as a pilot show, if it might take a lot of getting used to. For the opening ten minutes it positively cracked along — wooden acting, rusty dialogue and decrepit jokes. Some of them were also pretty disgusting, but then it was late at night — I think we could cope.

As a result, while Sean, the midfield dynamo, had to "ground the lavy" to get a pass for a Tuesday night out, "Grew had to sacrifice a sheep on the altar of Satan". Well, it made me laugh, as did "get your mother stripped", she's playing up front".

As well as raising a ritter, those

two were among the very few jokes that would make it to the pages of a family newspaper. That is not necessarily a bad thing, but whether running the series back to back with *Men Behaving Badly* is a smart move remains to be seen. One way or another, it is not an hour for the faint-hearted.

Finally, let us consider *The Street* (BBC2), presented by Kirsty Young wearing her concerned expression. It is like a *Down Your Way* for the 1990s, where instead of being asked to choose a favourite piece of music, the residents of a chosen thoroughfare (last night's was in County Durham) are invited to share their problems, seek counselling, get free advice... the full, nanny-state disaster. The show is obviously well-intentioned (all do-gooders are) but this opening episode came over as glib, patronising and far too like a low-budget *Challenge Anneka* for its own good. I hope they're not coming down my street.

• Lynne Truss is on holiday

6.00am Business Breakfast (98-04)

7.00 Olympic Breakfast. Featuring the overnight action from Atlanta including the women's 800m freestyle swimming final, the men's 50m freestyle and highlights of Britain's Malaysia hockey side. Includes 7.15 BBC News (297/75).

9.00 News (Ceefax) (479/113)

9.05 Olympic Grandstand. Extended highlights of the last night's action, including swimming, hockey, gymnastics, boxing, tennis, badminton and basketball (Ceefax) (s). Includes 11.00, 12.00 News and weather (491/9640).

12.35pm Neighbours. Annaise pays a high price to her relationship with Stacie (Ceefax) (s) (745/859).

1.00 News and Weather (Ceefax) (228/62).

1.30 Regional News (1219/2989).

1.40 Olympic Grandstand. The first of the day's live reports featuring round one of the women's 400m and the qualifying rounds of the men's high jump. Plus at 4.00 Ulford Christie begins his defence of his 100m title. Also in this report: three-day evening, swimming, rowing, tennis and cycling. Plus coverage of the Test between England and Pakistan at Lord's (s) (940/1775).

5.35 Neighbours (r) (Ceefax) (s) (145/268).

6.00 News and Weather (Ceefax) (355).

6.30 Regional news magazines (607).

7.00 Essential Sports. Desmond Lynam reviews the day's action from Atlanta, including the opening day of the athletics competition. Featuring Ulford Christie in the first rounds of the 100m plus action from the three-day evening, cycling and judo competitions (Ceefax) (s) (53/17).

8.30pm EastEnders. Both Alan and Ian suffer at the hands of their respective parents (Ceefax) (s) (83/8).

9.00 News; Regional News and Weather (Ceefax) (046).

9.30 Chicago Hope. After he undergoes an extraordinary operation to remove a steel rod protruding from his head, the personality of Dalton Robertson is changed beyond recognition (Ceefax) (s) (915/249).

10.15 Olympic Grandstand. Desmond Lynam introduces live coverage of the second day of the track and field events, including 10.30 Women's 800m featuring Kelly Holmes 11.10 Women's 100m second round 11.10 Men's Indoor jump qualifying rounds featuring world champion and world record holder Jonathan Edwards. 1.35 Men's indoor second round 12.00 Men's 400m first round featuring Roger Black and Duaine Ladel. The rest of the swimming finals are contested tonight at 12.45 and 1.12pm. With Britain's hopes riding on the backs of Paul Palmer and Gresley Smith in the 1500m freestyle. Plus boating, weightlifting and yachting action (s) (643/1097).

4.25 FILM: Cardboard Cavalier (1949, b/w) with Sid Field, Margaret Lockwood, Irene Handl and Jack McNaughton. Historical tale set in Cromwellian England, about a hapless fruit-and-veg man who is unwittingly caught up in a Royalist plot to overthrow Cromwell. Directed by Walter Forde (71993/98). Ends at 6.00.

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6.10am Open University: Designs for Living (666/1607) 6.35 El Escorial (618/5046) 7.00 Breakfast News (Ceefax) (532/2238)

9.05 Spiderman (r) (s) (320/943) 9.25 Bounding Back: the Best Bits of Johnny Ball (r) (Ceefax) (s) (63/936) 9.55 Paddington Piss (r) (628/8510) 10.00 Playdays (r) (s) (627/2959) 10.25 The Addams Family (518/249).

10.50 Cricket — First Test. Coverage of the second day of the first Test (s) (716/28065).

1.00pm Secret Life of Toys (r) (s) (768/2539) 1.15 A-Z of Food (727/0481) 1.25 Wear It Well (765/61046).

1.40 Cricket — First Test and Racing from Ascot. Coverage from Lord's plus racing, the 2.15, 2.45, 3.15 and 3.50 races. Including at 3.00 News and weather (s) (864/7976).

4.05 News and Weather (Ceefax) (s) (557/4978) 4.10 To Me... to You (Ceefax) (s) (565/153) 5.00 Newsround (Ceefax) (84/6775) 5.10 Record Breakers (r) (Ceefax) (s) (780/5930).

5.25 Cricket — First Test and Olympic Grandstand. Further live coverage of the second day's play at Lord's plus news from Atlanta (s) (588/659).

7.00 Top of the Pops (Ceefax) (s) (1423).

7.30 Gardeners' World. Stephen Lacy enjoys the sweet scent of rose bushes (Ceefax) (s) (133).

8.30 Olympic Grandstand. Sue Barker introduces action from Atlanta including the women's javelin and 200m plus, judo, weightlifting and tennis (s) (595/9423).

10.15 Travel Show Short Cuts (350/510).

10.30 Newsnight (Ceefax) (21997).

11.00 Coronation Street (732/840).

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